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The Light Spring Lingers

By Lady Margaret Sackville

I

THE light Spring lingers, yet earth half waking
Smiles and relents from her long sleep breaking,
  Stirs and sighs 'neath her veil of snow—
Through the woods which the storms have harried,
Laughter light as a flame is carried
  Through the cloven boughs where the young winds blow.
Lover of mine, the white Spring calls me,
With a voice that holds and binds and enthralls me,
Which stabs with joy till the heart brims over,
Love me enough (for I fain would prove her),
  Love me enough to let me go.
My feet would join in the new surprising
Sweet strange dance of the year's uprising,
For the shining birth of the gracious May-time
Is the golden festival of the sun's play-time,
  When all things quiver and burn and glow :
Would you prevail with me, O my lover ?
Then follow me where the hills uncover
Their glad grey heads in the light of the sun,
And farther yet and beyond the last bound
Of the mountain-sides where earth still lies fast bound
  Waiting the sign that her sleep is done—
Oh ! we will fly than the Spring's self faster,
And breathe in her ear that the days fly past her,

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And that she must wake, for the frost is banished,
The skies are kindled, and youth begun.

Now that the might of the sun's shaft reaches
Through the hollow straight to the heart of the beeches,
Where light is faint and the wind breathes low—
Beyond the plains and the sheltered valleys,
Where all that's left of the last snowfall is
To the high grey crag where the eagle screeches—
Love me enough to let me go.
Ah! but honey and wine and passion
Are good, but I love in a freer fashion;
As the warm wind loves when the rain-cloud scatters,
And he tears the veil of the day in tatters,
As the last falling glad wave of the sea,
As all things happy and wild and fleeting,
Hark, oh hark, to my heart's loud beating,
'Tis the heart of earth that beats in me.
Let me go ere the day grows older,
When the bright hour fades, would you seek to hold her?—
Nay, but she fades if you will or no.
Lo! now the woods and the hills receive me,
Lover of mine, oh! love me and leave me,
Leave me, or follow—but hear me imploring,
Love me enough to let me go.

Now that a warm wind lightens and passes
With trailing pinions through the green grasses,
And the ice is snapped and the mad streams flow—
What should I do then with love, I pray ye,
With love that hinders and would delay me,
Whose voice is solemn, whose feet are slow?
O love, if you will come with me a-dancing,
Where shadow and sun through the new leaves glancing,
Mock at joy which is kin to woe—
Ah, but ruinous love's endeavour
To bind and blind and hold me for ever,
Who am I to be cheated so!

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THE LIGHT SPRING LINGERS

Nay, my lover, pardon and speed me,
Let me run wherever the wind shall lead me,
Speed at my side, though your heart reprove me,—
Follow and blame, but I pray you love me,
Love me enough, in the year's new dawning,
Love me enough to let me go!

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Pyrrha on the Hill

By Ethel Clifford
(Mrs. Fisher Dilke)

My mother danced in Agamemnon's house.
The myrtle wreath still clasps her withered brows
  Where the earth holds her deep.
And I who breathe her spirit must remain
Here on the hill between the sun and rain
  And tend the crying sheep.

My mother danced for Agamemnon's eyes.
Was I not fathered in the galleries
  Of the long house of stone ?
My feet remember floors they never stirred,
My ears hold music they have never heard,
  My heart a song unknown.

This old grey shepherd is no kin of mine.
His blood is water to my leaping wine,
  His heart ash to my fire.
He lies all day upon the sun-warmed grass,
Content to watch the idle seasons pass,
  Without dream or desire.

Doom came upon the king ere I was born.
My mother fled towards the shepherd's horn
  Among the junipers.
The shepherd made a grave for her, no more ;
And here he reared me for the love he bore
  That stricken face of hers.

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PYRRHA ON THE HILL

And must I stay until my beauty fades,
And I grow reconciled to seek the shades
  That see all beauty's end,
Here on the windy hill of empty days
With foolish sheep that only care to graze
  And have no thought to spend ?

I would be closed about with silk-hung walls,
That seem to live when passionate music calls,
  And have my senses filled
With chant of fierce armed men, with heavy air
When dawn makes violet the torches' flare,
  With scent of wine new-spilled.

Dead Agamemnon, help me to my hour.
Deep-buried mother, give me of your power,
  Inform me with your breath.
Let me but once, with jewelled arms held up,
Drain of desire and dream the golden cup
  Even though to drink be death.

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The Chance

By Mrs. W. K. Clifford

I

Miss Fingall was thirty-seven, a thin shrinking quiet woman with a long narrow face that had many lines on it, smooth brown hair drawn back into a knot, grey eyes, vague and unintelligent but kind—always kind. Her manner conveyed an unconscious knowledge of her own dullness, even of her occasional silliness, and of futile efforts to conquer it, but the failure did not apparently distress her. She was placid and content, a human *cul-de-sac* of which the end was soon reached, but that was so peaceful and devoid of rough places it was impossible to regret the time spent in wandering along its unexciting way. She was quite alone in the world but she had money, it had come to her from the last of her relations—together with a pretty cottage at Wavercombe and an old-fashioned house in Montagu Place, near the British Museum. Previously she had lived high up in an economical flat at Battersea, liking it better than the conditions brought about by her greater wealth; for the London house was ugly and at the Cottage she felt blighted. The Wavercombe residents who called found her dull and uninteresting, she was neither quick at the up-take nor ready to be amused, not even picturesque or pretty, just a rather dreary woman whose mouth drooped at the corners and whose eyes seemed to betray that she was wondering why her visitors had come and when they would go.

Near the cottage on the main road there was a high brick wall with a stone coping to it shutting in a big house and some acres of ground. Here lived Sir John Collop, sixty and gouty, his wife, fifty, red-faced and thick-set, a son who was a cub and two daughters who would have some thousands when they married—but as yet their marriages were not arranged.

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Lady Collop duly called on Miss Fingall, stayed ten minutes, looked at her critically and said good-bye with an air of relief. Miss Fingall returned the visit and left with a sense of having been vaguely snubbed. Later she was invited to a garden party where she stood apart, felt out of it, and came away depressed. This programme was repeated round the neighbourhood.

In London it was no better. She knew no one; yes, there was the doctor who attended her for a severe cold. He looked round at the large pieces of furniture, noted the silver salvers on the sideboard in the dining-room as he took his way briskly through the hall, and realised that she must be well off and lonely. He sent his wife to see her. They invited her to dine; she went in an ill-fitting frock with her hair badly done and hardly spoke.

And there was the lawyer, he knew her investments, his wife also made overtures, but the result was the same: Miss Fingall was no good for social purposes. Yet one day when she heard his child was ill she sent a rose-tree and a note. A grateful mother came calling a fortnight later. "It's very kind of you to come," Miss Fingall said in a slightly treble voice and looked at her dismayed.

She struggled to play her part. Sometimes she took a box at the theatre and asked the lawyer and his wife, or the doctor and his wife, to dine and go on with her. They found the dinner unimaginative and the conversation tiresome. At the play they were always conscious of that burden in the box—their hostess.

One day a seemingly trivial event changed everything. Lady Collop, being in Great Russell Street, remembered that Montagu Place was just round the corner: it was half-past four and a suggestion of tea was in the air.

Miss Fingall was sitting by a dull red fire in the bleak-looking drawing-room with shut windows, though it was late spring and the sun was shining. "It's very kind of you to come," she said meekly, just as she always did. "I very seldom see any one."

Lady Collop explained, it took from the grace of her visit, that she had been quite near and was tired.

"I didn't think you'd come so far on purpose to see me,"

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Miss Fingall said in her simple manner that held no offence or sarcasm. "I sit here for weeks sometimes, and no one comes."

"You must find it very dull."

"Oh yes, it's dull, but of course I must expect that."

"I suppose you've some occupations—or amusements?"

"Yes—but I don't find any of them interesting."

Lady Collop thought, "What a fool the woman is."

Mercifully, the tea appeared; good old-fashioned china cups, a silver teapot with a milk-jug and sugar-basin to match, bread and butter, in large thin even slices neatly arranged, and a small round currant cake of which a quarter had been cut out. It all looked dull and stale, but Lady Collop warmed up a little as she doubled over a slice of bread and butter and realised that the outside of her cup was quite hot.

"Are you coming to Wavercombe for Whitsuntide?" she asked.

"I don't know," Miss Fingall answered vaguely. "Sometimes I think I will go somewhere else, but I don't know where it would be."

"I'm going down to a new place to-morrow—Leesbury—a few miles from Great Missenden, it's very small, just found out, they say the air is good—and there's a little hotel called the White Hart."

"Are you going to stay a long time?"

"No, only a few hours. A second cousin of mine is there with her two children—she is ill, or thinks she is."

"I dare say you're very sorry for her," Miss Fingall said politely.

"She has brought it on herself," Lady Collop answered in the tone of one who had never transgressed. "She made an imprudent marriage—a man who spent her money and then deserted her. She divorced him, of course."

"Her friends must be very unhappy about her," this by way of a variation on her previous remark.

"She hasn't any friends and her husband alienated all his. She's only my second cousin," the relationship was evidently a grievance.

"If I went there I could go and see her, if you like."

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Lady Collop jumped at the suggestion. "How very kind of you. She's at Highbrook Farm, a mile off. The air would do you good and I am told the White Hart is very comfortable."

"Is she young?" Miss Fingall asked after a pause.

"She's eight and twenty. Her eldest child is just three and the baby fifteen months—her husband left her before it was born. You must tell me about her when you come to Wavercombe again." Lady Collop had no intention of corresponding on the subject.

"I haven't made up my mind that I'll go yet," Miss Fingall answered with mild indecision.

"I should think it would be much better for you than staying here," her visitor snapped and departed.

The dull woman sat by the fire with her hands folded till the light faded and the servant brought in an old-fashioned lamp. Then, half in a dream, she got up and wrote to the hotel at Leesbury to ask for a bed and sitting-room facing the road. "I like to see things passing," she thought.

II

Four days at the White Hart. Opposite there was a common and beyond it some newly built villas—a sign of the days to come. On the fifth day, as the wooden clock on the mantelpiece struck three she got up as if a spring had been touched, rang the bell and asked for a fly to drive to Highbrook Farm. All the way there she felt as if she were being sent rather than going of her own accord: it was very curious.

The farmhouse stood well back from the road, it was old and picturesque, with small windows and heavy worn-out doors that creaked and groaned at being used. Miss Fingall's heart beat quickly as she asked for Mrs. Bowton.

The farmer's wife called upstairs, "Bessie, are you there?" A pleasant-faced Scotch girl with red hair appeared: she looked like a marigold in an old garden.

"Mrs. Bowton's at home," she said, "but I don't know if she'll see you—are you a friend?"

"I'm not a friend yet," the meek voice answered, "but Lady Collop thought I might come and see her." The mention of

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the name had due effect. She was shown into a room on the first floor, on the other side of the house—evidently one that was kept for visitors. A cottage piano, that did not seem to belong to it, was open, a Polonaise of Chopin's aslant on the music-stand; a box of books was by the round table that had been pushed from the middle of the room to one side; in a corner of the old-fashioned sofa some crochet antimacassars were heaped, suggesting that they had been collected from the backs of the chairs. Facing the doorway was a mullion window with a deep ledge inside and close to it a wicker chair with untidy cushions —as if some uneasy person had been sitting there to look out on the garden below. The garden was bounded by a privet hedge with a gate, near by was a lilac-bush in full bloom, over the hedge honeysuckle straggled, beyond were out-buildings, a field and trees suggesting wooded distances.

While she stood hesitating there entered, from a doorway on the farther side of the room, a fragile-looking woman —a girl rather—with a white face and dark eyes that stared bewildered at the visitor.

"Lady Collop thought I might come—I am a neighbour for a little while. I hope you don't mind?" Miss Fingall was apologetic, almost frightened.

Mrs. Bowton seemed to take in her whole personality and to be satisfied. "How kind of you. Do sit down," the voice was magnetic and grateful but uneven, it came with an effort. "Did cousin Augusta send you?" she indicated a place on the sofa.

"She told me you were here alone and she thought I might like to stay at the White Hart." Miss Fingall wondered what to say next, but she had no fear of being snubbed.

"Are you there alone?" the girl asked; her wide eyes looked sympathetic, but as if they were weary with thinking of things that were sad and frightening.

"Oh yes, I'm always alone," the visitor answered, then hurriedly, "Lady Collop said you had two children?"

"Yes, two babies. They are asleep now, the sun made them drowsy——" A fit of coughing stopped her, her breathing came with difficulty.

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"Oh, you're not well—you're not at all well."

"No, I'm not well—" then quickly, "but I'm going to get well—it's beautiful air. Shall you stay long?"

"I don't know," Miss Fingall said helplessly; "I never know. Perhaps you'll come and see me one day at the White Hart—it's very comfortable there." She was unconsciously repeating Lady Collop's remark, but it was so difficult to find things to say—she never could.

"If I can—or won't you come here? I'm not able to walk much. Come to tea to-morrow—no, on Thursday—and I'll show you my babies," her voice was tender when she mentioned them; "they are very little," she added with a smile.

"I should like it." An expression that was almost surprising had lighted up Miss Fingall's face, she was not accustomed to cordiality. She ventured to look round. "I see you have a piano," she said.

"I hired it from Great Missenden. It is not up to much, but I like the yellow silk in the front, it's the colour of the sun; I tell myself that on rainy days," Mrs. Bowton answered with another smile. It stirred something in her visitor's heart and gave her still more courage.

"Perhaps you'll play to me one day if I come? I used to play a little—but I don't know what is the matter with my fingers——"

"Of course I will," Mrs. Bowton said impulsively, "and I can lend you books—I have some down every week," she nodded to the box. "You'll be happy at the White Hart," she went on, "the country round is charming and the woods are full of bluebells already. Oh, it's lovely—I wish I could walk——" She coughed again.

"I don't think you're at all well," Miss Fingall repeated dully.

But the dullness only provoked the girl's compassion. "Why are you all alone at the White Hart, do you live alone?" She asked.

"Yes, I'm always alone," Miss Fingall repeated. "I haven't any one at all belonging to me. You must like having your two babies."

"I do." Her voice seemed to come from the depths of her

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heart. "I adore them. Did Cousin Augusta tell you about me," she asked suddenly, "that I had divorced my husband?"

"Yes, she told me;" then slowly, "I suppose you had to do it?" Evidently divorce was a strange subject not usually discussed.

"He didn't care for me any longer—he liked some one else better. I had to do it."

Miss Fingall nodded her head. "You had to do it," she echoed; it seemed in some bewildering fashion to give her understanding, to make things clear. They looked at each other for a moment in silence, then the visitor rose regretfully, "I think I ought to go—" as if she hoped to be pressed to stay longer.

But Mrs. Bowton made no effort to detain her. "You will come on Thursday," she said, "at four?" She looked searchingly into the plain sensitive face again and, for no reason that she tried to analyse, her heart reached out to this timid spinster who was evidently kind and gentle but unconsciously desolate, half paralysed by her own loneliness. Miss Fingall almost visibly shrank before the dark eyes, as if she feared the tragedy written in them would make some appeal to her and there was nothing she could do, no comfort she could offer; they frightened her and filled her with vague unhappiness.

She walked back to the hotel—her little steps made the way seem very long—and she said to herself over and over again, "She must have suffered dreadful pain—I'm very sorry for her."

As she sat at the window looking blankly out at the roadway and the common and the empty villas waiting for the unknown people who would come to live in them, a motor-car suddenly pulled up. A cloaked and hooded and veiled woman sat in it.

The chauffeur asked the ostler, standing outside, the way to Highbrook Farm, then the car whizzed onwards.

"Perhaps some one else is going to see her," Miss Fingall thought, "it will cheer her up. She looks as if she'd suffered dreadful pain," she repeated once more to herself.

III

Miss Fingall was right. Linda Bowton had suffered dreadful pain and it was killing her, pain—and the longing to live for the

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children she adored. "Nothing will matter," she said to herself when her visitor had gone, "if I can only live and keep them with me—I will bear anything—suffer anything if I may do that—oh, dear God, give me my children well and happy—torture me as you will but give me that. We'll go away somewhere—I'll earn money for them and be happy. . . . Oh, my darlings, sometimes I cannot bear the awful fear of leaving you. If that happened—oh, no, no, dear God be merciful—" she reached up her hands appealingly, "oh, no—no—no," she entreated. Then in sheer desperation—in a wild struggle for control and forgetfulness—she went to the piano, and the means by which she hoped to earn money became apparent. Her soul seemed to go to the tips of her fingers—into the notes—the dead lived again—the air was full of sound, of voices, of secrets they whispered. The player listened—leaning forward without lifting her hands, without ceasing—she could not see them but she knew they were there—very near—the black dots and lines on the page before her held their messages, the keys beneath her hands were the keys to a world that was quite near her, a world that had been—and was—and was to be. . . . The strain was too great, she broke down—the handkerchief she put to her lips had a red mark on it when she took it away. "I can't—I can't—" she cried as if to those who knew. . . . Noiselessly they stole away . . . she put her hands over her eyes . . . very softly the gates shut and the room was empty—she felt as if she had stood watching the dark road that leads from life to death—from death to life—knowing that soon she would be a fugitive seeking shelter, looking back at the world—wringing her hands at the children who stayed in it, at the winds that whispered and swirled her onwards—at the relentless forces before which the loosened soul was helpless.

The farmer's wife entered, she held a card in her hand. "There's another lady," she said; "she's come in a motor and wants to see you."

"Who is she?" Linda read the name and retreating—she had risen—stood against the piano, her eyes flashing with amazement and anger. "I can't see her. Tell her to go away."

There was a little sound outside. "Oh, do see me, please"—and a woman trailed in.

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The farmer's wife went out and shut the door, leaving the two together.

"This is an outrage—how could you—dared you come?" burst from her lips, her breast was heaving.

"It took courage"—the speaker's voice was sweet and reckless, suggestive of laughter, though she was grave now and evidently in some agitation; "praise that if nothing else." She held out her hands, but Linda shrank back frightened. "Look here, don't let's be theatrical—I get enough of that—we're two women, and we're sensible—you know I couldn't have come for anything disagreeable—or to be unkind." The accent was wrong, the tone and manner were common, somehow it helped to propitiate her listener.

"What do you want?" she asked.

"Mayn't I sit down?—and I'll get off this outer skin if you don't mind." The motor-coat was opened and thrown aside, the veil unwound that had enveloped the head; there emerged a woman who was pretty and blue-eyed, with red lips and pink cheeks—of which art as well as nature had some knowledge—and masses of fair hair that showed beneath the small hat. She was round, well-favoured, had evidently fed well and drunk well, lived in comfortable surroundings and on easy terms with her dressmaker—a strange contrast to the girl still shrinking against the piano, pale and emaciated, while all she had suffered made a passionate protest from her dark eyes.

For a full minute they looked at each other. "What have you come for?" Linda asked again, trying to check her cough. "How could you dare?" She was stupefied with astonishment and the insult of the visit.

"Well, really, I don't know how I did," the other woman said, "but it's no good beating about the bush—is it?—so I'll tell you——"

"Does—he know?"

"Not he! I sneaked off—thinks I'm rehearsing—it's just this—" she stopped to gather courage, "your face has haunted me ever since I saw you in court the day of the case—didn't know I was there, did you, hidden away at the back? You mayn't believe it, but I felt a thorough beast—it isn't my fault as much

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as you think, for I give you my word, till two months before, I didn't know he was married, hadn't an idea of it."

"He didn't tell you?"

"Not a word. He'd been going pretty rapid with Iris Howard too, before he came on to me; she didn't care for him—I did. But I never dreamt of you—and I want you to know," she rose quickly, her manner changed, it was impossible not to believe her, "that if I had, I would have died first. I don't mind treating a man badly—what's he for—don't they pay us out?—but a woman—well, I never did that before—I never would—it's where I draw the line—and it's cut pretty deep into me, I can tell you, though he's just the world to me now—same as he was to you perhaps."

She stopped, but Linda made no sound, only stood staring at her, half dazed.

"You see, Dicky's the sort of man who can't keep long to any woman. You've got two kiddies—I'm coming to them—and I expect he was longest with you—you've had the best of him, but once he's got a woman, why he's tired of her in no time and wants another. He doesn't mean it, perhaps he can't help it, he's like a bee that goes along from flower to flower in a garden——"

"What have you come for?"

"I've told you already. I want you to know that I'm not as bad as you think. I want you to forgive me some day—before you die anyway. I haven't done you as much harm as you think, for if it hadn't been me it would have been somebody else, so what does it matter? But it won't hurt me—when he goes, I mean—as much as it has you, for you see I've got the excitement of the theatre and I make lots of money—one can't have it all ways. He likes money too—at least, he likes what it does—he told me he had spent all yours—and you can't make more—I can. But oh," she said with a sudden rush of passion, "I wouldn't have done it, I wouldn't have done it if I'd known. I would have cut off my right hand first—and my foot too for the matter of that, then I should never have danced again anyhow."

"Is he going to marry you?"

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"Don't know. Depends a good deal on whether I'll marry him—it's a big step, is marriage—three months yet before the decree's made absolute, so there's plenty of time. He would if I had your kids——"

"If you had them!" Linda turned on her like a tigress. "I would rather see them lying dead. . . . Does he want them?" she asked with a sudden drop.

The woman nodded.

"Does he care anything about me?"

"He's awfully sorry you're ill. Hasn't been up to much himself lately—sent for Dr. Donaldson—and asked all about you."

Linda looked up with a drawn face. "Then he knows—but it isn't true—the doctor is wrong—I am stronger than he thinks, I shall get well—I will."

"Well, I hope so, of course; for one thing if you die I shall feel like a murderess. But look here, we never know what's before us, so what I want to say is this"—her voice had become very human, even tender, it took away from the offence of her words—"if anything did happen—Dicky says there isn't any one belonging to you except Lady Collop—I think it was Collop—it's a name and a half—and he says she's an old cat—well, if anything does go wrong—I want you to let me have the children——"

A thin hand went to the panting throat, to speak was impossible.

"I'd do everything for them—I'd marry him then—I'd bring them up just as you'd like—so would he, I'd make him, I'd take care of that—and I'd love them, I'd love them as if they were my own—and I'll never have any—you had better know that—never can—it had to be. I'm making heaps and I'd settle it on them, week by week I'd give it into a lawyer's hands. They shouldn't go on the stage or do what I'm doing, they should be brought up lady and gentleman—they should go to college, go abroad, I'd do everything for them. Don't you see they've Dick's life in them, the best of it, the part you had—I've only got the dregs of him now, I've only had dregs all my life—money and all is only dregs when it comes in the way it does to me."

"I want you to go away," Linda said, in so quiet a voice that

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it almost startled the other. "They are my children—mine, not his any longer—they're mine, and in that way he is mine still—the rest is yours. I'm glad I've seen you—that you didn't know—that you've explained him to me. I didn't see it before, I mean that anything but—what he did—was impossible to him. Somehow—I don't want to say this with any arrogance—he and you, and all the things with which you are concerned, belong to some other world than the one I have entered lately."

"But if anything happened—we never know—" she stopped, fearing to show what she had seen written on Linda's face.

"I will keep them—living or dead—I will never give them up."

"Well!" It was the other woman who staggered back this time; for the tone made her feel it was true, that they were standing in different worlds, and speaking across the distance between.

"I want you to go away—marry him if you can, make him better, but go—I want you to go—if there's any reparation you wish to make me, let it take the form of vanishing completely from me and mine."

"Well!" the woman said again in a lower tone, "I'm sorry—I thought perhaps you'd see it—I meant to do what I could——"

"Yes, I see it," Linda said, "you are better than I thought, but go—go."

"Just say that you forgive me?"

"Oh yes, I forgive you. But I want you to go—I entreat you to go."

"I will"—the speaker turned away disappointedly; "but look here, perhaps we're both wound up a bit now—if you think better of it, I'll do all I've said—I'll do everything I can." The tears came into her eyes.

"Thank you," Linda said and once more she repeated, this time very gently, "But I want you to go."

The woman went forward a step.

"No—no!" The white face was distorted with agony, the eyes were aflame. "I couldn't bear you to touch me—and if you dare——"

"Well!" the woman said once more, almost frightened.

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"All right—I'm off." She put on the motor-coat, gathered up the veil and without another word—bewildered—went down the stairs—they creaked as she went over them. The chauffeur outside set the machine going.

Linda went out to a landing from which she could see the road, the motor was already beyond the farm gate—in a moment it had vanished.

Looking downwards she saw the farmer's wife. "Do you know if the children are awake?" she asked.

And the answer came: "They've gone with Bessie to see the cows milked. They'll be in directly now."

She went back to the room and opened the mullion window—wider still, as if to change the atmosphere, then sat down on the basket chair that had many cushions and, leaning her arms on the deep ledge, watched—panting—breathless, only half alive—watched, while the scent of flowers, of stocks and early roses, came up to her—the honeysuckle was too far away.

"Oh, to live—to live—I will—I will——"

Five minutes passed—ten minutes. Now and again a bird chirped a soft good-bye to the spring day that was nearly over; but she heard nothing, saw nothing, her face was hidden—she was praying—still in the same words—"Let me live—let me live."

Then through the distance, from behind the hedge, on their way from the outbuildings beyond the copse, she heard the sound of singing—they were coming—they had seen the cows milked—a little pause, as if they had halted—then softly, Bessie went on with her song:

Wha'll buy m'caller herrin'?
They're bonnie fish and halesome farein';
Wha'll buy m'caller herrin'?
They're new drawn fra' the Firth.

The beating of a child's drum—with a first sense of time, it was wonderful to hear it—and they came in sight, the red-haired Scotch girl carrying the baby and a little fair-haired boy walking close to her skirt, a toy drum slung round his shoulder and a stick in either hand. The sunlight fell on them as they came through the gate.

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"Oh, to live—to live," moaned the watcher at the window. "O God, give me any agony, anything you will, but don't take me away from them." She reached out her hands—waited and grew calm, as if she knew that some presence hovering near had heard.

IV

Four o'clock on Thursday. Tea was laid in the sitting-room at Highbrook Farm; thick cream, of the Devonshire sort, and a cake that the farmer's wife had made.

Linda, thinner if possible even in the last few days, her breathing more difficult, was resting on the sofa, saving herself up for the exertion of entertaining a visitor. The children would come in at a quarter to five—the baby in a white dress, the little boy in his green sweater and the soft cap that made him look like an elf born in the woods.

But the time passed, and no Miss Fingall appeared. At twenty minutes to five there entered a fussy gentleman who had evidently tried hard to cultivate a professional manner. He carried a square deal box, nailed up; it had not been opened since it came from the stores. He explained that he was the local doctor, that an hour ago Miss Fingall had ordered the fly, on her way to it she had fallen, sprained her ankle badly and was hurt in various ways. She would be in bed some time. On recovering a little from the shock, greatly dismayed at not being able to pay her visit, she had sent him in the fly to explain, and had asked him to bring this box of toys; she had written to London for it.

"Oh, how kind of her. Why, she has never even seen the children—but I felt how kind she was the other day. I will go and see her——"

"Not yet, perhaps in a couple of days." The doctor was anxious to make the most of the patient from London who had taken the best rooms at the hotel.

V

All night Miss Fingall moved her aching head about on the lavender-scented pillows; when sleep came fitfully she dreamt of Highbrook Farm and of two children, shy and hesitating,

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who looked at her. Once, half awake, she called to them; the chambermaid heard and told the doctor, who insisted on sending for a nurse from Amersham—it was quite a case for him; he wondered if it would be important enough for a consultation.

A few days later Linda Bowton came to see her; she had walked, and her face showed how great had been the exertion. She sank into the chair by the bed, she could hardly speak.

"Oh, you shouldn't have come." Miss Fingall was quite distressed.

"I wanted to—I couldn't stay away." The last words were half whispered. Why did she care so much for a stranger?

"It was too far for you to walk."

"I rested before I came up—oh, I left the bluebells downstairs."

"The bluebells?"

"They gathered them—the children and nurse—baby picked some with her own hands—they sent them to you for the toys—how kind it was of you to think of them."

"I am so glad I did," Miss Fingall answered. Her usually dull eyes were full of tenderness and her pains seemed to have fled. "I wish I had seen them the other day." She pulled at the bell-rope beside her. A servant appeared—the nurse had gone out. "I want you to bring up the bluebells that are downstairs, —and some tea, and to order the fly to take this lady to Highbrook Farm presently when she wants to go. You will stay an hour?" she pleaded.

"An hour—not longer." Linda waited till the servant had left the room, then leant forward to kiss the hands folded outside on the sheet. "How kind of you to think of the fly—how dear you are altogether."

Tears gathered in the elder woman's eyes. "You mustn't do that, no one ever did it to me," she said, "no one at all——"

Linda raised her head and looked at her—at the long, plain, pale face with deep lines on it, and the weak mouth with the corners that drooped so easily, it was trembling with emotion. "I wish I knew about you," she said. "You are not strange to me—and you are very lonely, I can feel that you are—and it seems as if there is something that brought you to me. Have

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you no belongings, no friends who love you and take care of you ?"

"No one at all does that," Miss Fingall answered feebly. "People don't care for me. I wish they did, it must be so"—she hesitated, the dark eyes bending over her suggested the next word, it wasn't one that she herself often used—"it must be so beautiful. You see I'm not clever," she added, "I'm not anything—I think I should be different if I saw you sometimes—you are not like any one I know. It is just as if——" she stopped for a moment and shut her eyes; it was all so strange, as if she were drawing in the life that the fragile casement before her was not strong enough to hold—it seemed to be escaping, to quicken the whole atmosphere.

"You shall see me sometimes if you care to," Linda said, "and the children—they will love you." The words sank deep in her listener's heart.

"Tell me what they look like ? I'm afraid I shan't see them now till I'm better."

The girl leant her elbows on the bed and looked into space, as if she saw green fields. Miss Fingall thought it was like music to listen to her, she took in every syllable, heard every whisper of the low voice, ached at every difficult respiration—it was the keenest hour the dull spinster had ever lived.

"Do you know what they are like now ?" Linda asked presently, looking at the half-closed eyes.

"Yes—I know—I can see them—quite plainly. Perhaps you would tell me about—" she hesitated, but the words forced themselves out, "about their father—if it doesn't hurt—I mean only—what he was like, too ?"

"He was born in the summer—he seemed to belong to it—to be the sport of its winds—irresponsible—and full of charm; he cared for nothing long—I was only a day in his summer—that was all. He used to go away, but he came back, just as the sunshine does, and stayed a little—only a little while—but the summer is soon over—" she stopped for a minute. "Before the second baby was born he had gone altogether. I heard afterwards—there was some one else—but he left her too—he went on—I saw that woman only a few days ago——"

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"Oh, it's dreadful," Miss Fingall said feebly.

"I don't think he can help it." Linda coughed and struggled for breath, but her listener was dumb. She went on suddenly: "Lately I have seen the soul of him—we never understand the control that body and soul have over each other; something, for which he was not to be blamed, seemed to move him, as a tree is blown by the wind—he was not strong enough to resist—it's all so tangled and queer—the master of the soul—whatever it is that masters it—isn't as strong sometimes as the master of the body—have you ever thought about it?"

"No, I never have." Miss Fingall was mystified, confused, a little frightened. "I will," she said, "I will now, but I don't think I shall understand. You have the children," she added, "they'll make you happier——"

A stifled cry came from Linda's lips. "Yes, and they love me, and I love them—they are the world to me now." She shut her eyes. "Oh, to be strong—I am—but my soul is stronger than the body that holds it—I dread lest the outward me should drop away—down into the earth again—but life itself cannot—surely life cannot? If we could only know what life is—" She looked up again at the woman lying before her, then, as if with an effort, brought herself back to an earlier part of their speech. "His best life is in the children," she said with a smile that transfigured her, "and they shall be strong of soul and sweet of heart—his heart and his life—and they are mine, he gave them to me—" She leant her face down on Miss Fingall's hands. "I love them so." Her voice trembled with passion.

It was almost more than the lone woman could bear. "I can feel it—I love them too, just as if I'd seen them already," she said.

Linda raised her head and as she looked at her a strange peace found its way to the dark eyes. Her manner changed, her mood seemed to drop from her.

The door opened. "Why, here is tea—shall I pour it out—may I?" she asked.

Miss Fingall started as if released from a spell. "I never knew any one like you," she said half to herself, "yet I seem to have known you always. I can't think why it is—it is very strange," she repeated in the old silly manner.

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Linda put a pillow beneath Miss Fingall's shoulders and raised her tenderly—there was a thrill in every touch of her hand—before she poured out the tea."

"Tell me more about the children," the dull voice had become eager, "and about things you've done."

Then drowsily she listened to stories of the children and of places she had never seen—places of which the memories seemed haunting her. "You ought to go abroad for a little while—it widens the world for one—it would make you forget this accident—but a sprain is a long business, it won't be possible just yet."

"I shouldn't know where to go." Miss Fingall struggled to be herself. "Tell me about somewhere easy to get to."

"You might go to Avranches, in Normandy," her visitor said after a pause. "It's a little place—I love it very much—there are such straight roads to drive along—long white roads—with trees on either side—perhaps they're spoilt by motors now—I don't know. At Avranches you must stay at the little hotel with the green shutters to its windows; I forget it's name—but it has a rose garden and is very peaceful. In one of the churches there is a tomb with a glass case on it holding the wax effigy of a girl. She has dark hair and thin cheeks like mine"—she touched her own—"she is dressed in satin—it's so tragic and grotesque and queer—I wonder if she is young still—the poor wax effigy lying there is young—why should she, for whom time is at an end, grow old?" She stopped a moment and then her tone had changed. "You can drive to Mont St. Michel, it's a wonderful place. We had a high room looking on the sea—we sat up late looking at it—listening—but in the morning the tide had gone and only the sands were left. Over the sands a religious procession—white-gowned and red-robed—was coming from the mainland, with a golden cross held high in front of it; the sunshine fell on the red and white—on the golden cross—and the gold of the sun was over everything—it sparkled on the sea that had gone into the distance. We heard them singing——"

"I can see it all." Miss Fingall's eyelids drooped, her soul seemed to have gone outwards—to the sea, to the sand—she could hear the voices chanting, she could see the sunshine, feel it—soft and warm.

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"You must get some sleep," Linda whispered; "the fly drove up to the door a minute ago—but I shall come again. When you are well you will see the children and they will love you."

VI

Three days later. Miss Fingall was very ill. . . . Something clutched at her throat, a cold hand seemed to be laid on her heart, but she was lying quite passive and didn't mind illness any more. Was it because of the great curiosity that sent her soul searching beyond the gorse-covered common and speeding along the dusty road with the hanging wood high up on the right-hand slope? How strange, she remembered that other road—the long one from Avranches with the pointed trees on either side—she thought of the church and the waxen effigy of the girl lying dead in the finery that her closed eyes would never open to see. . . . The carriage stopped beside the sea, from which rose a mountain; on it were heaped houses, a palace, a fortress . . . she remembered it now—once she had seen a picture at a railway station, a coloured print of Mont St. Michel and the Abbey that crowns it—she had longed to go there, to walk round the ramparts and climb the steep stairs to the unused rooms—the rooms of centuries ago. It was just as well to go in imagination—she saw it as plainly as if she had been there and really remembered. The tide went out—and out—and out, but there were no sands, only green fields. At her side, she heard a voice say, "They will love you"—but she couldn't move—she couldn't breathe, a tight band was round her head, a weight was on her chest, her limbs were rigid—oh, she was dying, she was dying—a stone was at her lips—a stone—an icy hand was raising her—oh, she was dying. . . . It was only the nurse putting a cup of milk to her lips—the nurse's arm behind her—she had been dreaming—she had really hurt her head a good deal in that fall—she was glad of the strong arm to rest against.

"You're much better—you are through the worst."

She looked up and wondered where she was—of course, at the White Hart.

"Have I been very ill?"

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"Very ill—but you are better. Shut your eyes and try to sleep again."

Miss Fingall smiled and did as she was told—a long and blessed rest it seemed—she awoke, but made no sign—she was glad to lie still—it was weakness probably. When she tried to think, it was an effort to realise the things that had been in her life before these days of illness; across her brain strange fancies came and went, of places she had never seen, of things she had never known.

VII

Three days more. She was much better. They moved her nearer to the open window, the sunshine filled the room, she saw the roadway beneath. "I shall see anything that comes by," she said to the nurse and smiled softly to herself.

"You'll see—that poor lady's funeral come by directly," the nurse hesitated before she answered.

"The poor lady?"

"The lady at the farm. She died the night you were so ill."

"Where are the children?"

"Some one took them away yesterday."

"I shall never see them." The words came to her lips mechanically—her brain was still confused. She shut her eyes.

The sound of footsteps, of wheels turning slowly. A little procession—one carriage and a few stragglers behind an open hearse—on the coffin, a wreath of bluebells.

"I heard that the children gathered them with their own hands—the little boy and the baby—they made her pick some too," the nurse told her.

A strange half-silly smile came over Miss Fingall's face; she knew it to be there but could not control it. "Perhaps she isn't dead after all, there may be only a wax effigy in the coffin—no one knows." She lay back and closed her eyes.

"You've had a bad pull down," the doctor said. "You ought to go to the sea presently, and in the winter to a warmer climate." He knew it was the thing to order patients abroad.

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VIII

She felt curious as she drove from the station to Montagu Place; she wanted to see the house again. It looked different from her memory of it—cheerless and ugly. "It wants more colour, more air," she thought and consulted the lawyer's wife about it.

"The tumble on her head has done her good," that lady told her husband, "she's more intelligent, but there's a strange dazed look in her eyes, as if she were gradually awakening from a long sleep—and she doesn't seem to remember much about Leesbury."

At the end of the summer Miss Fingall obediently took herself off to the sea—to Margate, the doctor had said it was the air she wanted—to one of the quietest hotels at the far end of Cliftonville. She took walks inland, and lingered looking at the hop-poles—there was a windmill too, she had never noticed how picturesque a windmill was till now. "The world is more beautiful than it used to be," she said to herself one morning, "the things in it seem to have more meaning. But I feel as if I were waiting for something—as if, hidden away, there were people I loved . . . people I couldn't reach—if I could only know who they are, or where they live." But this idea, which seemed to have floated into her mind from without went vaguely on again and was forgotten.

One day two people motored over from Ramsgate to lunch—a plump fair woman—and a man who looked bored and let his eyes wander round aimlessly. Miss Fingall found herself watching them, wondering about them, a little afraid of the man, attracted by him and repelled. She passed them when she had finished. At the doorway some one stopped her; it was the man; she was startled, almost frightened.

"You left this bag behind—I saw it on your table," he explained.

As he gave it to her his hand touched hers, it sent a strange thrill through her. She hardly thanked him.

"A nervous creature," he told his companion. "Think I've seen her somewhere——"

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"Isn't an old love, is she, Dicky?" the woman said jeeringly. "Doesn't look your sort, does she?"

"Something attractive about her," he answered, "don't know what—awfully pretty girl over there with the green hat."

The woman rose quickly. "Hope it won't be quite so beastly dusty going back. Let's be off."

"Wish you'd learn to speak properly," he said impatiently. The girl in the green hat gave him a little smile. "An hour or two with her would pick me up," he thought as he followed his companion out.

Miss Fingall was in the hall, she watched him go through it.

"Queer woman," he said to himself and took his place beside the fair woman in the motor. "What are we going to do to-night?" he asked; but he found himself thinking of Avranches, of the rose garden at the hotel, of the walk to the church and the long straight road, white and narrow in the distance. He shuddered and hated the woman beside him now.

IX

Miss Fingall felt like a waif at Mentone. She hid herself in a small hotel near the station. No English stayed there—but there were Poles and Russians and Hungarians—all manner of strange tongues were heard at the little tables in the *salle à manger*. She liked hearing them—they made her think of countries far away—the countries she had never seen. She remembered a wonderful sentence she had read, she didn't know who had written it (it was Madame Novikoff), that ended "but the Slavs stand on the threshold of the morning." She looked round at the people—they were mostly Slavs. Did they know, or did they think that endless night was with them, as perhaps she had thought it was with her when she lay at Leesbury with the pain gripping her heart and throat? She was always afraid to remember that night, she did not dare to think of Linda or the children, she was not strong enough yet.

She went out one evening by the door that led to the end of the Public Garden, swiftly towards the sea. "I stand on the threshold too, on the threshold—on the threshold—" her heart cried out to her. She sat down on one of the empty chairs

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against the green hedge that bordered the road on the landward side. She looked across to the sea, veiled and mysterious as the future, and beautiful—oh, dear Heaven, how beautiful it was—but everything had beauty or mystery in it now. And so many messages seemed to come to her, she was conscious of them yet could not divine their meaning: it was as if they were given to some other self sheltered by her humanity, and she but just caught a whisper of them.

The Polish girl who had been playing in the little *salon* rose and went to the fire. Almost without knowing it Miss Fingall looked at her music and then apologised for her rudeness.

"Oh, but do," the girl said, "and try anything you like."

"I should be afraid before you."

"I'm going out for a little while—do, while I'm gone."

Miss Fingall looked at the music again—there was a Polonaise of Chopin's, the one she had seen on the piano at Highbrook Farm. . . . "It's so difficult," she thought breathlessly. But no—but no—it all became plain to her as she looked. She sat down and put her fingers on the keys—they found the right notes. It was wonderful—it was wonderful—she had never dreamt of this. . . . And there were listeners, smiling to her, helping her, reaching out—touching her softly with hands she could not see—but she knew—she loved them. Oh, it was beautiful—this was the world of sound—the meeting of the worlds that had been—and were—and would be in the years to come.

X

In the spring she went back to Wavercombe, but she felt that she couldn't live at the cottage if the rooms remained empty. They seemed to cry out to her—to tell her that they were waiting—but for whom?

The first evening of all, just as if she had been bidden, she went out—along the road till she came to the high wall with the stone coping on the top; no memories were in her heart, no design nor any intention, she simply gave herself up to outward influences—to the greenness of the trees, the softness of the air, the crispness of the loose gravel on the path. There was an

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iron bench against the wall, on which wayfarers might rest; she sat down, and peace stole to her heart, a vague sense of happiness that was to come.

Then from behind the wall came the sound of children's voices. She rose to her feet. "They're here," she cried, "the children—they're here." She stood transfixed, she listened breathlessly with a sense of having been stunned and dazed—of waiting—of feeling refreshed—of getting ready for some life that was her due. Her heart beat quickly. The sounds went farther and farther away—they were gone—but the joy of them remained with her. She went back to the cottage and lay awake thinking the whole night long. She saw the dawn rise, the dim trees that had been watching for it, grew distinct—they knew!—hazily the whole world knew—only she was mystified.

XI

In the morning, Lady Collop driving by was surprised to see Miss Fingall fly out to her. "Oh, do come in—I have something to say, to ask you."

"My dear Miss Fingall"—she sat down puffing on the sofa—"how good you were to poor Linda Bowton—so touching of you to send toys to the children."

"But I never saw them"— she was still breathless—"I was going to see them when I fell."

"Most unfortunate—I hope you feel no after-effects?"

"No, I'm better, it has done me worlds of good." She laughed and Lady Collop wondered at the different expression on her face.

"You probably know that the children are with me—there was no one else to take them."

"You must love them so——" A little thrill was in the voice.

How foolish people were about children, Lady Collop thought. "Well, to tell the truth," she said, "I find it a great encumbrance—starting a nursery too, at this time of day—the girls naturally object, and Sir John is gouty——"

Miss Fingall sprang forward, her eyes were shining, her voice was eager. "Give them to me," she cried.

"Give them to you?"

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"I have no one on earth belonging to me; I've been wondering—hoping—longing—and this is it! Their mother only saw me twice—but I think she would trust me. Oh, let me have them—let them be my children?"

"But really—dear Miss Fingall, isn't this a wild impulse?"

"It's no impulse—unconsciously I have been looking for them—longing for them, I know it now. Oh, mayn't I have them—won't you do it?"

"I could do nothing without my husband's consent."

"Then ask him. Tell him what I say—there is nothing in the world I will not do for them."

"It would be a great thing for the children. No doubt it would be a comfort to you——"

"When can I know? I can't—can't wait." Miss Fingall clasped her hands over her heart.

"Come this afternoon—you shall have an answer." Lady Collop went away devoutly hoping the dull spinster had not come by madness.

XII

Oh, the long hours of that day—but every one of them was filled with life to the brim and charged with promise.

She could scarcely drag herself along—beside the wall—past the seat on which she had sat the night before—in at the gate—to the much-bedecked drawing-room.

For a moment she was alone. There were open French windows and, beyond the trimly kept lawn, were trees and the blueness of the sky. Sir John and Lady Collop entered together.

"My wife has told me of your very remarkable offer. On thinking it over, are you quite sure?"

She looked up at the slow, heavy couple. "I want them—I want them—I would take care of them—love them so, if you'll let me have them?"

"My dear lady, it would be impossible to refuse such an offer. It is a solution of a great difficulty for us. I understand you will provide for them?"

"Provide for them," she cried, "they shall have everything I possess. When may I have them? Now? May I have them now?"

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"I'm afraid not to-night, but to-morrow they could come to you with all their little packages—would you like to see them?"

"May I—may I?" Her heart stood still.

"They went to see the cows milked," Lady Collop said; "they will be here in a few minutes."

"Let me go and meet them." A dazed look came to her eyes. "Tell me the way."

"We'll take you." They stepped out with her on to the lawn.

She stopped suddenly. "Let me go alone," she said. "You are very very kind—but it's more than I can bear, this happiness—tell me the way."

They looked at her and in a sense they sympathised. "Go to the end of the garden, through a gate by the lilac-bushes and you'll see some trees and a field, they will come across it from the cowshed."

She hurried away like a dream-woman. She saw them when she reached the trees, they were nearly across the field. She drew back and watched them—the red-haired Scotch nurse—a baby girl toddling by her—on the other side a little boy in a shabby green sweater that looked too small for him, his little soft cap was pushed back—she could see his eyes and the gold of his hair. The sunshine fell on them, the nurse lifted the baby in her arms.

"They're mine—" Miss Fingall said to herself, "they're mine."

The nurse began to sing, very softly:——

Wha'll buy m'caller herrin'?
They're bonnie fish and halesome farein';
Wha'll buy m'caller herrin'?
They're new drawn fra' the Firth.

Then all things fell away—she was by the mullion window, her arms reached over the ledge, she heard the sound of a little drum—for one moment—for just one moment and never again—she understood.

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Light on the Rokeby Venus

By James Greig

I

I SHALL endeavour to tell quite simply the story of the discovery of certain ciphers on the picture which it has become the fashion to call the Rokeby *Venus*, and to recount without prejudice the subsequent controversy. At the outset let me say that the marks which I described were found quite by accident. When I had assured myself of their presence on the canvas I asked Mr. W. E. Barber, Literary Editor of the *Morning Post*, to verify my belief. This he was able to do after a long and careful scrutiny. Yet I still hesitated to publish the news. I was fully conscious of its serious import. The picture had been accepted as genuine, and praised beyond measure by the "greatest experts of England" as one of the finest works of Velasquez, and it had been purchased for the enormous sum of £45,000 through the medium of the National Art Collections Fund. True, at the time when it was bought for the National Gallery several eminent men vehemently disputed its artistic quality and authenticity, and had the support of many painters of high standing. But the "leading critics" and well-known amateurs who admired it were in the majority, and as soon as the picture was hung in the National Gallery the discussion dropped. I knew that to revive it would be to cause great wrath and indignation in certain quarters, but, on the other hand, I had myself (for many reasons which I shall recount later) never been satisfied as to the authenticity—or indeed as to the quality—of the picture. It seemed to me that my discovery might provide reasonable people with a means of settling the vexed question once for all.

On April 5 the announcement was made in the *Morning Post*.

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I will not deny that its publication created a much greater stir than I had anticipated. Eminent critics, artists and connoisseurs in England and on the Continent girded up their loins and prepared for battle. Many of them misunderstood me from the beginning and jumped to the conclusion that I had declared the *Venus* to be the work of Del Mazo—whereas I had, as a matter of fact, ventured no opinion as to its authorship. What I had said, and said clearly, was that I saw on the canvas certain ciphers which, in case no other explanation were forthcoming, might possibly represent the name of Del Mazo. The real question to be settled was the existence or non-existence of certain marks that I believed to be intentional. The artistic quality of the painting, though an interesting and material issue, was still a side issue.

The air was filled with dogmatic clamour. "No Spanish artist of the time of Velasquez," said Mr. Claude Phillips, "ever signed his pictures with monogram or initials." As a matter of fact there are many such signatures on Spanish pictures of the period, as both Mr. Langton Douglas and myself have since proved. "Nobody ever painted a '7' like the one in your supposed date," we were told. The truth is that during the whole of the seventeenth and eighteenth century scarcely any person in Western Europe made a 7 in any other way. But it would take too much space to enumerate all the random assertions which inquiry has since proved to be baseless.

For the purpose of settling the main question—the existence or non-existence of the ciphers—a number of experts, all of whom had been to some extent responsible for the purchase of the picture, wandered into the National Gallery on the morning of April 7. I was not asked to join them in the first instance, although in their "report" they distinctly implied that I was present during the whole time of their scrutiny. As a matter of fact, when I reached the Gallery on the day of their meeting, I was unaware that anything out of the ordinary was taking place. I saw that the *Venus* had been removed, and was making inquiries of an attendant, when Sir Charles Holroyd came to tell me that the gentlemen who formed the "Committee" would like to consult me. I found to my surprise

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that a decision had already been made, after a short—though no doubt minute—study of the wrong part of the picture. I pointed out their mistake to the "Committee," and the scene that followed might have been an incident from a comedy of Molière. Powerful magnifying glasses were hastily produced, lenses that would have diffused the *Venus* herself into little more than a vague luminosity. With these grotesque objects held close to the canvas, several members of the "Committee" did their best to find the half-erased ciphers. They might as well have tried to read a book through a telescope. The obvious result was that the streaks of paint were so magnified and diffused as to lose definite outline, while at the same time the field of view was so restricted that it became impossible to see any connection between one mark and another.

What the "Committee" prevented themselves from seeing with their large lenses was clear to me with my naked eyes. But one member, without looking at the picture, told me I was dreaming, and on the strength of not more than fifteen minutes' examination this "Committee of experts"—who were really the defendants assuming the *rôle* of jury and judge—condemned me for seeing what they could not see. Here is their decision: "We have satisfied ourselves that the marks and cracks detected by that gentleman [myself] and pointed out by him to us do not show the vestiges of any monogram or signature." This *declaratio cæcitatis* was signed by Mr. Claude Phillips, Mr. Herbert Cook, Mr. Lionel Cust, Mr. Roger Fry, Mr. C. J. Holmes, Mr. Robert Witt, Mr. D. S. MacColl, and Mr. Sidney Colvin.

When the inquiry was over I suggested that photographs should be taken. On April 9 Mr. Gray photographed the suspected corner of the picture, and his negatives and prints were carefully examined by Mr. Barber and myself. There we found new markings which seemed to us to be intelligible groups of letters and figures, which seemed, moreover, to have formed at some time or other part of a deliberate inscription. We also found distinct signs that the surface of the picture in this particular corner has undergone what seems to be intentional abrasure. It has been defaced in places with sand-paper

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or pumice-stone, and in others probably with strong spirit. The only conceivable explanation of such deliberate tampering with the picture is to assume that an attempt has at some time been made to obliterate the inscription, of which parts could still be seen in the photograph.

All these facts were submitted by Mr. Barber and myself to the Committee formed on the invitation of the Editor of the *Morning Post*, and their report, though not conclusive, fully justifies my action. The report itself is not, I must confess, easy reading, and requires some elucidation. What the Committee actually decided can best be gauged from the account given by Mr. A. J. Finberg—himself a member—in his recent article. "The Committee," he says, "agreed by a large majority that these markings were deliberate—that is to say, that they formed part of an inscription. Nor was this all. Three members of the Committee came to the conclusion that the markings originally indicated by Mr. Greig (what has been called the 'B. M.' signature) were parts of a deliberate signature, and with regard to the 'Mallet' series of markings four (as against six) of the members were prepared to admit the possibility of the existence of a deliberate inscription." "The second Committee," continues Mr. Finberg, "has succeeded in nullifying the misleading report of the first Committee," and he ridicules the assertion of Lord Balcarres that "the second Committee had definitely abandoned the authorship of Del Mazo." As a member of that Committee he assures Lord Balcarres that "the general question of the authorship of the picture was never once discussed at our meetings. The main question we addressed ourselves to was as to the existence of an inscription. Our report proves conclusively that an inscription did exist. The work of erasing this inscription has, however, been too well done to make the task of reconstruction an easy one."

To sum up this part of my article; I discovered marks upon the Rokeby *Venus* which seemed to me intentional. I announced my discovery because it seemed to me that these marks might decide once for all a very important controversy. A "Committee of experts" examined the picture and reported that they

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at least could see nothing. By the courtesy of Sir Charles Holroyd I was allowed to take photographs, which revealed still other markings, and I submitted the whole of my evidence and stated my conclusions to a Committee, which certainly could not be accused of any undue eagerness to believe me right. No one will, I think, dispute the accuracy of my summary if I describe their finding as follows: They all agreed that there were certain marks on the picture, which whether they should eventually be found to be intentional or not, at any rate justified me in raising the question. They were agreed, also, that considerable abrasure had occurred in the same part of the picture. Most of them were agreed as to the existence of the date 1764, and at least four members were prepared to admit that a deliberate inscription once existed in the lower left-hand corner of the canvas. Three members thought they saw marks of deliberate erasure.

II

So much for the public side of the controversy in so far as it affects myself and the inscription which I believe that I have discovered. It now remains to state as shortly as possible what are the chief facts which to-day have almost entirely destroyed the reputation of the Rokeby *Venus*.

Let us turn to the internal evidence first. The experts who spent their time and energy in building up the reputation of the picture told us that it was the finest painting of the nude in existence. They told us that it was undoubtedly painted by Velasquez. They agreed, as indeed every one agrees, that Velasquez painted his figures direct from life, and that he worked always with the same unerring certitude and accuracy. They stated that in this case also Velasquez had painted direct from life. They said that the *Venus* was of the same late and mature period as the well-known *Mars* and *Las Hilanderas* of the Prado. All these experts have presumably examined the picture with the utmost care, and they have come to the conclusion that every inch of the canvas justifies their statements, that the picture which hangs in the National Gallery to-day is to all intents and purposes just as it

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left Velasquez's brush. How far are they justified in these dogmatic assertions? In the first place, let us remember that every sign of repainting which occurs on the canvas will vastly weaken their case. Do any such signs occur? Let us begin with comparatively unimportant things. I have in my possession a letter from Mr. Rushworth, of Durham, a well-known picture restorer in the North of England, who states explicitly that his father many years ago repaired an injury to the *Venus*, which had been caused by a blow from the broom of a careless servant. Mr. Rushworth says: "I went to the National Gallery last Friday [May 13] and had a good look at the Velasquez. Even in that light I could see the markings described in the notes you gave me. They [the markings] have been put on with thick paint, that has set very hard, and at some time somebody has tried to remove them with spirit or something strong, and the paint or glazings have yielded before the thickly painted letters. The place repaired by my father is also very visible. It is just above the shoulders and like a jib; thus any one can see it has been done by the end of a broom." When I showed this tear to the second Committee they saw it and agreed that it had been repaired. It is amusing, however, to remember that one member declared that the irregular, ragged mark was due to a glazing put on by the artist to hide the first outline of the shoulders, the model's body having sunk through fatigue and thus created a new contour. Here, then, is the first evidence of restoration; no matter of opinion, but fully attested, and vouched for by evidence which would be accepted in any court of law. But is this all? By no means. Those with sharp eyes who will examine the picture in a good light will see that the face of the *Venus* was at one time two or three inches nearer the right side of the frame, and though the previous head has been cleverly painted out, yet distinct traces of its contour still remain. They will see too, if they examine the picture carefully, that the left shoulder of the figure was at one time considerably higher than at present, and that the contour from the hip-bone downwards has been clumsily altered. Another thing which they can hardly miss is the previous outline of the "Cupid," pointed

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out long ago by Mr. M'Lure Hamilton. At the back of the present "Cupid" there is the obvious outline of this winged boy with his face in profile. Even now one can see the brush-strokes following the form of his body and legs.

This at once raises another question. If extensive repainting has occurred—as it obviously has occurred—is it possible that it is due to the hesitation and vacillation of Velasquez when he painted the picture? Such a thing is, of course, not uncommon. Many artists have been known to change their minds and to repaint figures while their pictures were in progress. But in this case such a thing would be unexpected and unlooked for. For is not Velasquez the one artist who, according to all his critics, "painted the figure direct from life, and worked always with unerring certitude and accuracy"? The only way in which we can settle this question is by making a thorough examination of the brush-work itself. Is the brush-work consistent throughout, and if it is, is it similar to the work of Velasquez at the time when this picture is supposed to have been painted? On the first question the opinion of Mr. W. MacKay, of Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi, who has probably examined the surface of more pictures than any other man living, will carry greater weight than my own. Mr. MacKay told me, after he had examined the canvas without its glass, that there were "at least four or five repaintings applied at various times." The photographic enlargement taken by Mr. Gray proved that some of the repaintings must have been separated by considerable intervals of time, for in many places older cracks which have been "stopped" are evident under the fresher paint. None of these facts will serve to enhance the reputation of the picture.

And now a word about the anatomy of the "Venus" herself. Let us recall the fact, vouched for by all the critics, that Velasquez invariably painted direct from life. Is the anatomy of this figure correct? If not, it can only suggest the work of an inferior artist. I myself hold that it would be impossible for any normally developed woman to lie for many minutes in the cramped position of the "Venus." I have tried to place a model in the exact pose of the figure, but in a short time the

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position became intolerable and she had to rest. Nor at the angle at which the "Venus" reclines would it be possible to reproduce in nature the empty, ugly dip from the hip to the left shoulder, which has the appearance of the stump of an amputated arm, and were it not for the shapeless bit of foot no one would be blamed for thinking that the figure had no right leg. It would have been curious, too, had Velasquez, greatest of technicians, and recognised master of his art, "funked" hands and feet in the manifest way in which the painter of the *Venus* evaded them.

Let us pass on to the question—perhaps most important of all—whether any part of the painting bears in itself the hall-mark of Velasquez. In answering this question we may put aside for the moment a fact which I believe to be profoundly true, that it was psychologically impossible for a man of Velasquez's temperament to have painted such a picture.

The handling in my opinion is utterly unlike that of Velasquez. There is laborious and worried, if clever, work about the hips and the thigh, but no sign of the fluent sensitive touch of the master. Let us remember that Raphael Mengs—no mean critic—says of *Las Hilanderas* that it "is so well executed, that the labour of the hand seems not to have been employed, but that the mind alone conveyed the pencil." Could even an eighteenth-century eulogist have found the slightest hint of this elusive quality in the *Venus?* I do not think so. Some experts have asserted that the Cupid, "in spite of its excessive redness" (Beruete, by the way, approves of this *ton rougeâtre*), "is even more characteristic of Velasquez than the figure of the 'Venus.'" To me it seems strange that any one should be found to make such a statement. Nor am I alone in my opinion. There are not wanting distinguished artists and critics who refuse to accept the dictum of our "experts" and who deny that the *Venus* is a great picture from the brush of Velasquez. Among their number are such men as Mr. John Lavery, Mr. Wilson Steer, Mr. Henry Tonks, Mr. Maurice Greiffenhagen, Mr. Walter Sickert, Mr. Matthew Hale, and Mr. Arthur Rackham.

There are others who, while they do not suspect the "Venus"

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herself, believe the Cupid and the Mirror to be later additions by some inferior artist. My own opinion, for what it is worth, is that the picture bears evident signs that it is an eighteenth-century *pastiche*, though I am willing to believe that it may be based on a study made in the seventeenth century, and in this belief I am supported by an eminent judge of painting like Sir W. B. Richmond.

The critics rely to a large extent on what they are pleased to call "the pedigree of the picture." It is a pedigree which well repays examination. But first let us revert for a moment to the fragments of inscription which I believe to exist on the picture, and which have been seen by many people, among them Sir William Richmond, Mr. Alfred East, Professor Fred Brown, and Mr. Wilfrid Whitten. Suppose for a moment that these gentlemen are not mistaken, that an inscription did once exist, and that efforts, only too successful, have been made to erase it—why should this be? If, as some of the "experts" have suggested, the inscription was the signature of Velasquez, surely it must have been to the interest of those through whose hands the picture has passed to preserve the signature intact. It has been suggested that the inscription may not have been a signature at all. On this point I should like to quote the words of a distinguished critic who wrote to me the other day. "What must strike one as very funny," he says, "is that the men who are most vehement in denying the existence of any inscription are those who are most certain about the interpretation to be put on the remains, which according to them are non-existent or invisible. Mr. C——, for instance, is sure that the fragment of date which he can't see is an inventory number." Sir Charles Holroyd declared that the markings I had seen were due to the light touches and flicks of the fluid brush of the painter. Was it the habit of Velasquez, the most deliberate of artists, to add meaningless "touches and flicks" to obscure parts of his pictures where repose was absolutely essential?

But let us examine the pedigree. Unfortunately for the "experts" there are many silent gaps and conflicting statements in the legendary *provenances* of the painting. Justi, for instance, holds that the Rokeby *Venus* is the identical picture mentioned

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in the Royal Inventory, which is dated 1686. Beruete, on the other hand, asserts that the painting was at that period the property of Mendez de Haro, that it figured in his inventories made in 1682 and 1688—not in Madrid, be it noted, but in Rome and Naples. Madrazo thinks that the Rokeby *Venus* was removed from the Royal Palace during the fire of 1734 to the house of the Duke of Alba. Beruete says that "By the marriage of Doña Catalina de Haro y Guzman (daughter of Don Gaspar) with the Duke of Alba in 1688, the property of the Haro family reverted to the House of Alba, and with it the picture of the *Venus* of Velasquez."

Beruete further states that the *Venus* passed from the House of Alba to Godoy, Prince of Peace, and that after the latter's fall in 1808, it was sold to Wallis (the agent of Buchanan) in 1813, and was subsequently bought by Mr. Morrit. Miss Morrit, the sister of the gentleman who finally parted with this family heirloom, writes that "when the canvas was originally brought to England by the Duke of Wellington, who found it rolled up in the Duke of Alba's carriage on a battlefield during the Peninsular War, it was privately bought by my great-uncle, John Bacon Sawrey Morrit." Such discrepancies do not enhance the value of the official pedigree.

But within the past few weeks Mr. Leonard Williams has pointed out other facts—hitherto unnoticed—which are of the greatest importance. In 1776, Ponz, describing the Alba Collection in his *Tour in Spain* (vol. v. p. 333), says: "Among some paintings by Velasquez is a celebrated one of Venus lying down, her back to the spectator, showing her face in a mirror, which is before her." Now it must be remembered that until this passage in Ponz was unearthed all we knew was (1) that an inventory of Royal pictures made in 1686 (twenty-six years after Velasquez's death) contained a mention of a *Psiqui y Cupido* attributed to Velasquez, and (2) that in 1813 Buchanan's agent, Wallis, bought the Morrit picture in France. It would be natural to suppose, seeing that no mention of such a picture is to be found in the "Inventory" of canvases rescued from the burning Alcazar, that the picture of 1686, whether painted by Velasquez or not, perished in the fire of 1734.

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Beruete indeed implied as much when he disputed Madrazo's contention that it was carried from the burning palace to the residence of the Duke of Alba. Beruete, however, gets over the difficulty by discarding *Psiqui y Cupido* and adopting as the original Velasquez another picture entered in the Haro Inventory. But Beruete must not forget that ninety years elapsed between the making of the Haro Inventory and the visit of Ponz to the Duke of Alba's collection. Granting that the Haro Inventory was correct, and that the picture mentioned in it was actually painted by Velasquez, who is to say that the picture seen by Ponz in 1776 was the same? True, this picture also was attributed to Velasquez, but those who know the way in which ignorant servants made the inventories of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries will set no great store by that fact. The important point to notice is this: in Ponz's careful description of the picture he makes no mention of the "Cupid." Why? The reason may perhaps be found in the following extract from Henry Swinburne's *Travels in Spain* (p. 353). This well-known English traveller, whose veracity and accuracy Gibbon often praised, visited Madrid in 1776, and noted among the pictures belonging to the Duke of Alba "a Venus by Velasquez, lying half-reclined, with her back to the spectator and her face reflected in a mirror *she holds in her hand*." If our supposition is correct, one of two things may be true. Either the Alba collection included two or perhaps more paintings of Venus, all of them attributed to Velasquez, in which event the genuineness of the picture in the National Gallery would be seriously affected, or else there was at the end of the eighteenth century only one painting of Venus in the Duke of Alba's collection. In the latter case it is obvious that at some time extensive "faking" has taken place, and that the counterfeit Cupid must have been painted in at some date between 1776 (when the painting was seen by Ponz and by Swinburne) and its arrival in England in 1813.

I have now narrated the chief facts and arguments which seem to me to make the present ascription of the Rokeby *Venus* to Velasquez entirely unsatisfactory. With most reasonable people they will, I think, carry a good deal of weight. I quite

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realise, however, that controversy on these lines might be indefinitely prolonged and never lead to any satisfactory conclusion. Here, it seems to me, is the value of the defaced inscription. It is true that the inscription has been cleverly erased, but there are still words and marks easily decipherable which may yet—or so I venture to think—supply us with a clue, which will settle the matter for all time.

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In a Police Court

By G. S. Street

Some time ago I spent a morning in a London police court, and I do not hope to forget the impression which it made on me. On the whole, I would forget it if I could. But the philosophy and ethics and æsthetics of the matter may wait until the impression has been recorded.

It was probably all the stronger because I went without any particular expectation, and certainly with no idea of finding a subject for my scribbling. Save in so far as my presence might be of service to a friend, a lady who was compelled to give her evidence against a thief, my going was merely a bore to me and I went wholly preoccupied with my private affairs. That was very quickly changed. I had never been in a police court before, and it is likely that most of my readers have not either. They may have got a very life-like idea of one from Mr. Galsworthy's *Silver Box*, to be sure, but no illusion of the theatre could impress them like the reality. The theatre, because it can select, may give us a more vivid sense of the great and poignant emotions than (as spectators) we can get from life, where they come our way in a clumsy, irrelevant, and depreciatory setting; but the dismal, sordid, hopeless things of life need no trimming or colouring for their effect—rather the contrary, indeed—and however thorough the illusion, there is at the back of our consciousness the cheerful knowledge that the player led off to gaol goes actually to an agreeable supper: our thoughts do not follow him as they follow that poor devil from the real dock. Mr. Galsworthy's police court made me miserable enough, but it was nothing to the —— police court: I suppress the name, because I wish to write freely of it in sympathy or otherwise, and should not like to seem to particularise what I am told is

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average and typical. It is likely, again, that others of my readers may have gained their impression of police courts from a picture very different from Mr. Galsworthy's—that in newspaper paragraphs. There police courts are regarded as facetious and comic places. One evening paper specialises in their humour and is even good enough to turn some of the cases into ingenious verse, at which I fear I shall never laugh very heartily again. One magistrate has his latest joke reported from time to time: knowing him and knowing a police court (though not his) by now I well understand that he is forced to relieve the squalid routine with a lighter touch of humanity now and then or perish of nausea. But police courts are not funny places, and there will be no fun in this article about one of them.

Well . . . our taxi-cab turned down a side street from an outlying thoroughfare and stopped before the police-station. A dismal little crowd was hanging about. We were allowed to wait in a railed-off space outside the court, while distress came and pleaded in vain with authority—while anxious and tearful women appealed to final but not unkindly policemen to be allowed (I gathered) to see their men folk in custody. After a while I suggested that we should go into the court and wait until our case came on. I may have been thinking of the comic paragraphs rather than of Mr. Galsworthy: certainly I expected to be amused rather than harrowed. So we listened to a succession of "drunks and disorderlies." One seldom sees drinking which in the philosophy of Omar or Horace is drinking to excess, and when one sees it it is more often comic than horrible. Wrecks from drink one knows, but they are much as other invalid people, and one does not see them as a rule in very painful moments. Unpleasantly drunk people in the streets one passes quickly by. There is a long tradition of facetiousness about drunkenness. In a word, I was not prepared to be shocked, and I was miserably shocked. But no, dear enthusiast, you who are so keen to leave the world a little better and a little duller than you found it: I saw no lesson whatever for myself. Omar and Horace will continue to express a mood of my own, though I do not take their doctrine for a complete philosophy. My bottle of claret and my glass of port have lost nothing of their appeal. And I

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do not believe that if I ever became a drunkard I should be in the least like those wretches in the dock: for one thing, rather than drink the abominations with which our useless Governments permit rascals to send them thither, I would drink water even as you or kill myself. The moral is against poverty and dishonesty and incompetence—not against drinking. But *that* moral, at least, was pretty sharply pressed. One after another—dirty, vacuous, hopeless, wordless—they stumbled into the dock, and an alert policeman, with an eye of virtuous indignation on them, a look that said "You know you did: don't dare deny it," very plainly, told the symptoms of their disease or their hapless efforts to cheat misery and despair. I share the customary admiration for the police, on the whole, and should be sorry to offend them. But they are human and cannot escape the defects of their qualities or the reactions of their occupation. They are for ever in a position of moral superiority, they are always being good when other people are being bad: is it not inevitable they should acquire a rather aggressive air of complacent virtue? It was much in evidence in the police court, and helped to give one the feeling that all the world was against the luckless prisoner, so unequal to the contest. Then the magistrate. Every one praises the patience and kindness of our Metropolitan Police Magistrates, and I am sure the one before me deserved it all. There was nothing hasty or irritable about him, nothing sharp or contemptuous. He was later to give a fine example of wise mercifulness. But his very fatherliness, his gentle "This is very wrong conduct, you know," his regretful "You can't expect me to overlook it again"—all that made the inevitable sentence seem a more miserable confession of impotence before evil. Sometimes it was a fine, but there looked to be small chance of its being paid. And so the unfortunates, mumbling, resigned, desolate, shambled out of the dock and were shepherded through a door back to the cells. Let no sentimental cynic call me maudlin. My natural sympathy was with the magistrate who was evenly considerate, the policeman who had to do this poor sort of duty, but who would and often did perform a difficult and dangerous one. I felt sorry for the wretches in the dock and sick with the civilisa-

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tion which produced them, but given their production the lethal chamber, I was ready to admit, might be the sanest end to them. Only the squalid hopelessness, the unspeakable ugliness of the whole affair blighted one's spirit: it is that I am trying to express.

After the drunks the beggars. The part of London in which I live is infested by persons of a vinous appearance and fruity voice who are carelessly unconvincing in their tales of endurance, and these have gradually sapped in me the wish to act in the spirit of Elia's essay on beggars. I have no particular quarrel with them. Maxims about the sacred splendour of independence, like those about the nobility of toil, I have always suspected were invented by the rich for the use of the poor, and I happen to be poor. Still, when folk are obviously not in physical distress it seems to me bad taste of them to annoy strangers with their importunities, and I harden my heart in the streets off Piccadilly. In the police court, however, the beggars were in different case, pinched and pale and hollow-looking, and one could believe they had really needed the alms they asked for. I believe that these poor feckless things, "unemployable" I dare say, live mysteriously on the workmen who are employed and who are infinitely more generous than the better-to-do classes, and that when, as at present, these are apt to lack a job their parasites apply to strangers. The policeman in plain clothes who gave evidence against them had a way, curiously antipathetic to me, of dropping his voice with a sort of clerical solemnity at the end—"And so, your worship, I took him into custody"—as though the sinner had done something really monstrous. To me the offence of asking alms seems a light one, if it be truly an offence at all, and the punishment of prison for it a sort of brutality on the part of property, taking from these poor ones, indeed, the nought that they had—liberty to walk about and show their nothingness. So they, too, shambled from the dock to the cells, and the gloom and ugliness oppressed one more and more.

It was lightened a little by the cases of theft, because in them at least there was reason in punishing. To treat a disease or an unfairly poisoned body with prison seems stupid; so to treat

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poverty which merely says it is poor seems harsh. But every society not impossibly communist must protect property against depredators: all that the soft-hearted can fairly ask is that the excuse of want should temper the punishment, and when society is clever enough to punish the big thieves also these little mean ones will be without a grievance. Prisons, it is true, might be wiser places, but that was not the immediate point: these people really seemed to deserve more or less what they got, and so far one was happier. And it was here that the magistrate did his fine action, if it be not impertinent to compliment him. A workman was brought up on remand for making off with some fish from a stall. His defence was that he was in fun and had intended to take it back, a jolly defence but not without some twilight of dubiety about it. But he had never been charged before, was a good workman and an excellent family man, and the magistrate accepted his defence with a caution against joking with other folk's property. That incident positively cheered one. And then the next plunged one truly into the depths, not, this time, for the stupidity of our civilisation but for the pity and sorrow of human things. The case was of a sort one often sees in the papers. A young man had courted a servant maid, had possessed himself of her savings, ten pounds, and was afterwards disclosed as married already. The girl gave her evidence with a rather vindictive air, and I was not so sympathetic with her but that my mind was at leisure to travel, in its literary way, back to Congreve. For the man's defence was merely that he had spent the ten pounds on the girl, and that —do you remember?—was precisely what Fainall said to Mrs. Marwood in *The Way of the World*. Mrs. Marwood reproached him with having spent her fortune and he, as a complete justification: "Your fortune has been bestowed as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shared." One of Dumas' Mousquetaires would not have thought even so much of excuse necessary. The magistrate, however, was not influenced by those precedents and called the young man bad names, which I, too, think he deserved. In all this there was not much to touch one's heart, but just before the magistrate gave his decision the man's wife—it was obviously she—came

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and sat by my side, sobbing. She also, poor thing, took the Fainall view: "He spent it on her," she sobbed; "he spent it on her"—not in anger, but pleading. Clearly she had forgiven him his lapse and was only anxious about his fate. "It is a hard world for women," as somebody says, a truth I felt very keenly, who am apt to deny it of my own little section of the world where women in some ways have so much the best of it. This poor soul would very likely be left with children to feed if she could, waiting for a disgraced man whom she loved; it is a frequent lot for women, a rare one for men. The other woman I pitied less as a woman, the deceits of interested love-making being pretty equally divided between my sex and hers. But there were the two poor women, and the unmanly man between them: he looked a capable fellow and was, of course, to have his chances of usefulness to either destroyed in prison. To prison, of course, he was sent; and then came the pitiful climax. The man had asked, I suppose—I did not catch it—if he might see his wife, and the magistrate answered coldly: "I don't suppose your wife would wish to see you." But the poor wife did wish to see him; she started up wailing and made to meet him as he went from the dock; no doubt the magistrate was not told of her presence. A policeman repulsed her and her man was led away: I was told the custom was humane enough to let her see him afterwards. Then came our case, which was quickly over, for the prisoner, who had little excuse, confessed his fault, and so we got thankfully into the street of more average human chances.

More average, yes: the average poor and distressed person is not a drunk and disorderly, or a beggar or a thief. But those cases were not of monstrous and abnormal persons, but merely an end of the social system, so to say, joined continuously to the poor but honest and well conducted, the respectable, the well-to-do, the enormously rich. They were symptoms of a widespread disease, not freaks of Nature. They were the results partly, no doubt, of weak character, but chiefly of untoward circumstance. That, I suppose, will be granted in the main. Had I been writing to uphold a thesis I should have left out the jocular workman and the love-making young man; since

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I was merely to ask a question, I thought I might complete the record of my impression. A case or two of stealing also was irrelevant. But the most of the drunkards and the beggars and even the thieves were simply, as I say, ends of the social chain. Let us forget the others and keep to these and the misery and ugliness which they sufficiently connote. My question is: Ought such a person as myself to keep all that in mind or to forget it as much as possible?

I know the orthodox answer, of course. Taking the cases of the police court as symbols of the distressful part of the community, I shall be told that they are very much my concern, that it is a duty to one's country to do what one can to improve what is bad in it, that it is inhuman to turn away from human misery because it is ugly. There is something to be said on the other side. I left that police court with my nerves quite unstrung —I care not what comment be made on their quality—and with a black depression on my mind. I am of those whose consolation and sustenance in life are much, very much, in the sight of beautiful things—beautiful women, beautiful animals, pictures, trees, flowers, grass, the sea. Nature and artists have done much for us. Commercial man has provided a great mass of the opposite for us to gaze on if we will. Ought we to gaze on it? I am not suggesting that old intolerant idea, a little vulgarly narrow as it seemed to me, that we should turn carelessly and of course from misery and ugliness just because they are what they are. I felt uneasy as I left the police court and feel not at ease even now. I only urge a point or two on our behalf. A social system which produces such villainies as that of contemporary England is proven vicious, and it is an obligation on those who see that to do what they can politically to change it. But when we are asked to suffer what we should suffer by mixing with these villainies, it is fair to ask in turn what we ourselves owe to the social system. Nature and art, on which our common joys depend, are not a product of it, quite the contrary. And we ourselves—professional writing folk, let us say, with but a slight appeal to popular taste—earn our bread hardly and not nearly so much cheese as we should like to eat: we owe less than nothing to the social system. The miseries

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would not be a necessary condition of a small leisured aristocracy; if we had such a thing, and so far as we have it—a real aristocracy, with a useful lead in manners—I should not grudge it a general support, which would involve none of the horrors. These may not be—most Socialists say they are—the consequence of our thousands of indifferently attractive leisured folk, by no means aristocratic, by no means appealing in manners or culture, who are on our backs with their motor-cars and golf: but then England might tumble them all off for what we cared. No debt of ours forces us to encounter the squalor and ugliness. Taste may, sometimes, I truly believe. Cheap and mean to depreciate the merit of those who labour among the poor: it is merely fortunate that many people are not repelled by gloom and distressful appearances. We see that on an occasion of public mourning: while some of us, not less touched and sad than others at the event, rebel in soul against the black-clad street and drawn blinds—so foreign, as we felt them lately, to a joyous and kindly spirit that had passed—others revel in these things and exact the uttermost of them. So to some it may be, at least, much less repulsive than to others to rescue drunks and disorderlies and beggars, if they can. When conscience and humanity alone impel them . . . it is needless to proclaim one's respect. And yet—and yet—are not the workers among the very poor bolstering a system which they should be helping to demolish?

Well, such thoughts passed through my mind as I went away from the police court, feeling guiltier, I fancy, than many a prisoner. Was I forging cowardly excuses to myself, knowing, as I knew in my bones, that I would never voluntarily go back to it or visit any other such scene of depression? Perhaps a reader who thinks so may hope I shall go back some day against my will. But not with my will, ever again. My share of the sun is not unfairly large: I will take its beams while I may. But as for those whose portion is over-great, I hope sincerely they may have to make it up to those wretches of the police court in another world.

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"The Women of Shakespeare"

By Frank Harris

ARTICLE IV

Di te mi dolga, amor.—MICHELANGELO

THOUGH Shakespeare's passion for his gipsy-wanton reached its burning meridian in the sonnets, the long throbbing afternoon of desire was hotter than the full noontide. When he cried his love in the lyrics, he still hoped to win or charm his mistress; but her perpetual unfaith gradually dried up the affection and tenderness in him to the very roots, leaving only the lust of the flesh. Again and again the cruel desire was whipped to frenzy by jealousy, and grew in intensity as his love waned out. Incidentally I shall show that all his great tragedies were phases of his insensate passion for this one woman. She inspired the first great love-song of his youth, *Romeo and Juliet;* she inspired, too, the far finer and more terrible tragedy of mature passion, *Antony and Cleopatra.* All the plays from 1597 on reek of her presence, and Shakespeare's breakdown in health was due to the fact that he had spent himself body and soul in her earthy-coarse service. When at length she left him finally, after twelve years of passion and a score of betrayals, to be married for the second time early in 1608, he fell, to use Dante's phrase, "as a dead body falls"—never to recover completely. If ever a man was passion's slave it was Shakespeare. We have now to follow his agony from the sonnets to height after height where foot of guide has never yet passed; for the lover was Shakespeare, and every fluctuation of the "madding fever" was marked with a new masterpiece.

A great many English critics are intent on telling me that in painting Shakespeare in this way I am denigrating him, turning him from a demi-god into a mere man. At the very

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beginning of my labour, Meredith warned me that "Englishmen will not readily accept this picture of Shakespeare languishing and burning." But they are accepting it, it would appear; for truth carries with it a magic of persuasion, and they will yet come to see that, instead of diminishing Shakespeare, I am bringing him nearer to their love and affection by showing him pure human.

The greatest souls are just those most certain to fall victims to this passion. Goethe's best dramatic scenes came through his love for Friederike, and if he had written his enthralling passion for his drunken cook-wife he would probably have done infinitely better work than by speculating on theories of light. He knew a great deal about passion and its infinite forgiveness and indulgence and very little about colour-waves. Dante, too, has told us how easily gentle hearts are moved to love, and the line has become a part of Italian proverbial speech :

Amor, che al cor gentil ratto s'apprende.

Michelangelo, who was certainly strong among the strongest, had to confess his utter inability to free himself from the bonds of desire :

Amor, se tu se' Dio
Scioglimi, deh ! dell' alma i lacci tuoi.

It is no disgrace to our gentle Shakespeare to have been enmeshed in the same net, for no one ever turned his thralldom to such account. His passion can be studied in drama after drama, the mere names of which have become tragic symbols in the consciousness of humanity.

For the first three or four years of his *liaison* he continually painted both realistic and idealistic portraits of his mistress. About the year 1600 the idealistic portraits cease. The reason is indicated. In the last sonnet to his dark love one line wells up from the depths of despair :

And all my honest faith in thee is lost.

From this time on he gave up trying to idealise Mary Fitton. A little later and he will paint her to the life cruelly, strip her to the skin and scourge her with his contempt and hate till we are forced to pity her and take sides against him as a slanderer and a caricaturist who has forgotten in his jealous rage the high

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impartiality of the artist. But all the while the idealising tendency was in him, and if he could not employ it in painting Mary Fitton as Julia or Portia or Beatrice, he had to use it on imaginary figures. His mistress' faithlessness made him long for winnowed purity and devoted affection, and he gave name if not reality to this longing of his nature in Ophelia, Desdemona, and Cordelia. More than almost any other great artist, Shakespeare needed the support of actual life. Give him the realistic features and he will paint you a deathless portrait, now of Hotspur, now of the Nurse, but without the help of reality he floats about in the blue. His Ophelia and his Desdemona have no redeeming vices or weaknesses whatsoever. Ophelia can only weep and go crazy when Hamlet insults her, and when Othello outrages and strikes Desdemona she too weeps and forgives him, while wondering what her tickling eyes may portend. Mary Fitton's high temper and masculine strength put Shakespeare out of love with spirit and courage and marked individuality in women: Ophelia and Desdemona are mere abstractions of patience and affection—pale sister-souls, in fact, or bloodless sister-effigies; hardly a taint of earthly temper or tincture of warm humanity in either of them.

In *Twelfth Night* we see the first tendency to vague idealisation coming to view. Viola, with her resignation and patience, is the first sketch, so to speak, of Ophelia. But the sketch wavers; "she never told her love," we are assured in a famous passage, while a little later we learn that she told her love for Duke Orsino again and again.

In contempt of my efforts the professors will not see any connection between Shakespeare's experiences as a lover and his *Hamlet*. Professor Herford says: "Nothing that we know of Shakespeare's personal history really explains the startling and sudden intensity of personal accent in Hamlet or the changed outlook upon the world which here first becomes apparent." One can only stare at this black diamond. Shakespeare has sung his love in every stage: the young delight of it in Juliet; the courtings and the deceptions in Rosaline. He has painted his jealous misery for us in the sonnets; the "potions" he drank of "siren tears"; the "hell of time" he endured at

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the hands of his dark mistress. But the self-elected guides find in all this no explanation of what they are pleased to call his "changed outlook upon the world," which they declare "first becomes apparent" in *Hamlet*. Let us now consider this, the first of the great tragedies.

Hamlet is generally dated through its reference to the success of the child-players about 1601: it follows immediately on *Julius Cæsar* and the sonnets.

As I have shown elsewhere, the dominant passions of Hamlet are jealousy of his mother's sin and a desire to revenge himself on his uncle; his love for Ophelia is merely incidental. The most marked peculiarity in the play is so grotesque that it shocks me. No son ever spoke of a mother's unfaith with the passionate bitterness of Hamlet. It is plain from his extravagance of anger that Hamlet-Shakespeare is thinking of his mistress' lechery and not of his mother's; he cries at her:

> Have you eyes?
> Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
> And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes? . . .
> . . . What devil was't
> That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
> Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
> Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
> Or but a sickly part of one true sense
> Could not so mope.
> O shame! where is thy blush? . . .

Maddened with jealousy, he scourges himself with his own lewd imaginings as Othello and Posthumus scourge themselves. It is only a professor or commentator, or some expert in cloistered ignorance, who could believe that a man feels this intensity of jealous rage about a mother's sin. The very idea is worse than absurd. It is one's own passion-torture that speaks in such words as these. And Hamlet strikes this note again and again with the persistence of incipient mania, and again and again finds deathless painting words for his insane jealousy. Though the Queen begs him to "speak no more," he raves on:

> . . . Nay, but to live
> In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed
> Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
> Over the nasty sty.

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It is the act that maddens him, as it always maddened Shakespeare. But bitter as is Hamlet's view of his mother's (Mary Fitton's) sin, it is still the bitterness of disappointed love and is not without hope : he will have her repent, refrain from adultery and be pure and good again :

> . . . Confess yourself to heaven ;
> Repent what's past ; avoid what is to come ;
> And do not spread the compost on the weeds
> To make them ranker. . . .
> QUEEN. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.
> HAMLET. O, throw away the worser part of it,
> And live the purer with the other half.
> Good night : but go not to mine uncle's bed ;
> Assume a virtue, if you have it not . . .
> For use almost can change the stamp of nature. . . .

It is all directed at his mistress: he still hopes for her reformation ; but he sees no good whatever in the King. The King (Herbert) is mildewed and foul in comparison with his modest poet-rival—" a satyr to Hyperion " :

> A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
> Of your precedent lord. . . .

The extravagance of the comparison shows the personal feeling. Another rank fault in the play can be explained naturally by this hypothesis of mine, and by this hypothesis alone. Hearing Polonius behind the arras, Hamlet plucks out his sword and kills him, mistaking him for the King. Kindly, humane, reflective Hamlet would naturally be filled with remorse for this rash, thoughtless deed, and at first this is the note Shakespeare strikes : Hamlet echoes his mother and calls it a " bloody deed " ; but later, when we expect the cooler blood of regret to come to full utterance, he talks of Polonius with incredible harsh contempt :

> I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room. . . .

One is shocked, appalled by this unnatural cruelty of Hamlet, which is totally out of character. It seems to me that Shakespeare is here thinking of Herbert, who was the real object of his hate, whom again and again in mind he would have killed as " a foolish, prating knave."

There are scores of other proofs of the obvious fact that

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Shakespeare has got a passionate intensity into this somewhat unreal tragedy by identifying the chief actors in it with his rival and his mistress. The discrepancies in the play are not otherwise to be explained: for example, we all expect from Hamlet some expression of divine tenderness for Ophelia, but the scenes with the pure devoted girl whom he is supposed to love are not half realised, are nothing like so intense as the scenes with the guilty mother. Yet love should surely be stronger than jealousy of one's mother. Shakespeare did not take interest enough in Ophelia to give her flesh and blood.

Another similar piece of evidence: Laertes finds the best word for his unhappy sister: she turned everything "to favour and to prettiness." Why, then, as soon as she goes mad does Shakespeare make her talk smut? Why does even Hamlet talk suggestively to her in the theatre scene? Of course I shall be told that all this is due to Shakespeare's deep insight into human nature; but in a slight and charming sketch such as Ophelia was meant to be, this obscene coarseness is a blunder. The truth is, while writing this play Shakespeare was writhing in jealous misery; he sees the sexual act everywhere, and he attributes his mistress' lewdness to his heroine.

In Hamlet, reason itself is shaken. We can trace in him the beginning of the erotic mania which is to be found in almost every tragedy from this time on. I shall not labour this statement; it is self-evident, and the proofs of it will have to be repeated again and again.

After his betrayal Shakespeare went about nursing his jealousy to monomania—nursing, too, bitter thoughts of revenge on Herbert, though he knew well enough that he did not possess the desperate resolution to carry them into act. Lackey-like, he had to admit that mere regard for position and power would give him stop: Herbert was too far above him:

> There's such divinity doth hedge a king
> That treason can but peep to what it would.

But Shakespeare felt very acutely that any young nobleman in his position would have had no scruples on the matter: Laertes strides to his revenge with instant, conscienceless resolve.

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Shakespeare knew that his own hesitation and dislike of bloodshed were in themselves nobler :

> The rarer action is
> In virtue than in vengeance. . . .

And thus Hamlet becomes more lovable to us through his very gentleness and horror of bloodshed.

Hamlet is a magnificent study of the literary temperament, and the picture is made dramatic by the passionate realisation of the hero's revenge and jealousy.

Hamlet's love to Ophelia is scarcely strong enough to deserve the name, but his jealousy is a raging, burning fever.

> Get thee to a nunnery : why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners ?

is all he can say to Ophelia, but to his mother he raves as one possessed :

> Not this, by no means, that I bid you do :
> Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed ;
> Pinch wanton on your cheek ; call you his mouse ;
> And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
> Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers . . .

The jealous rage is already almost maniacal in intensity.

Othello is a far finer and more complete study of jealousy and revenge than *Hamlet*. The jealous rage of the sonnets is lifted in *Hamlet* to a higher pitch, and in *Othello* is further intensified to deadly menace and murder by a superb and natural plot. Hamlet's jealousy is unnatural ; but Othello's jealousy of Desdemona is almost inevitable ; it is reason-founded on difference of colour, education, and surroundings, and is whipped to madness by vile and envious suggestion.

Hamlet is Shakespeare himself, while Othello at first is a marionette of whom we have no intimate understanding. I have pointed out elsewhere that Othello is a fair sketch from the outside of a man of action until he becomes jealous, when he is used as the mere mouthpiece of Shakespeare's own passion. For a master of men Othello is a surprisingly apt subject of jealousy, being exceedingly quick of apprehension and easily convinced on mere surmise. He passes, too, at once to revenge, and will glut his hate not only on Desdemona, but on Cassio. But the quick change in the painting of Othello from the bluff Captain to the poet-lover is not so soul-revealing as the fact that

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in *Othello* Shakespeare has given us the finest words for desire and jealousy in the language :

> . . . O thou weed
> Who art so lovely-fair and smell'st so sweet,
> That the sense aches at thee !

Passion never found a more splendid phrase ; and it does not stand alone. When Desdemona lands Cassio cries in Shakespeare's very voice :

> The riches of the ship is come on shore.

And a little later Othello calls Desdemona :

> My soul's joy . . . Excellent wretch.

And if desire is enthrallingly rendered, jealousy finds an even intenser note : Othello's cry is astounding :

> I had been happy, if the general camp,
> Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body
> So I had nothing known. . . .

That " sweet body " is incomparable.

Another proof that Shakespeare in all this is putting himself in Othello's place and speaking of Mary Fitton is at hand. Othello praises Desdemona as a " sweet creature . . . and admirable musician " : " O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear : of so high and plenteous wit and invention."

Now consider these qualities. We never knew before that Desdemona was an " admirable musician " ; indeed we have already learned from the clown that Othello " does not greatly care to hear music." How are we to explain this manifest contradiction ? Shakespeare makes all his men of action, such as Hotspur and Harry V., dislike music, and he begins by lending Othello the same defect ; but here in his jealous rage he forgets his puppet's qualities, thinking only of himself. He loved music, as he has shown in a score of plays, and his " dark lady " of the sonnets often charmed him with her playing. Sonnet 128 begins :

> How oft when thou, my music, music play'st.

It is Mary Fitton who Shakespeare feels could sing the " savageness out of a bear." Fancy, too, telling us that poor, patient, superstitious Desdemona was of " high and plenteous wit and invention." Shakespeare's Rosaline was witty, as we know ;

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his mistress of the sonnets too; but hardly Desdemona. Evidently Shakespeare is here thinking of his "dark lady." As soon as jealousy is touched upon, Shakespeare puts himself unconsciously in Othello's place and Desdemona becomes his wanton love. From that moment to the end of the play Shakespeare is Othello, and there are no pages in all literature of a more intimate self-revealing. By his gentle fair-mindedness alone we ought to recognise him:

> O Iago, the pity of it; the pity of it, Iago!

But in truth the whole passion is the passion of jealousy as Shakespeare conceived it. As I have shown in my book, *The Man Shakespeare*, Posthumus, an *alter ego* of Shakespeare, speaks of Imogen exactly as Othello speaks of Desdemona. Hamlet raves about his mother's fault in precisely the same strain as the King in *The Winter's Tale* raves about his wife's supposed slip; they all picture the act and excite themselves to mad rage by their own imagining. In all these plays the hero suspects some woman of unfaith, and usually the woman he loves.

There is another passage in *Othello* which alludes, I believe, to Shakespeare's connection with Mary Fitton, and gives us, to a certain extent, his explanation of why she played false to him. Iago says:

> When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be again to inflame it, and to give satiety a fresh appetite, loveliness in favour, sympathy in years, manners and beauties. . . .

All this applies to the Moor if you will, but it applies to Shakespeare too, and his position. In that word "manners" there is to me a glance at young Herbert and Mary Fitton, else why was it brought in?—for there is no hint of any such difference between Othello and Desdemona, though such a difference could be presumed. I find an intimate thoughtfulness in the words, which shows me they are personal: they supply the reason too why Shakespeare should handle this theme of the inferiority of an older man to the woman he loves, and fulfil it with such intense passion. Like his Othello, Shakespeare loved "not wisely but too well."

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It is, perhaps, worth while to notice that even in the surge and rage of jealous madness Othello-Shakespeare remains an Englishman and a moralist, or, as a foreigner might say, a hypocrite. Othello will kill Desdemona with the sword of "justice," will murder even from a high, unselfish motive—to prevent her betraying "more men."

But as I have said elsewhere, what interests us in Othello is not his strength but his weakness, Shakespeare's weakness—his passion and pity, his torture, rage, jealousy, and remorse, the successive stages of his soul's calvary.

Macbeth I need only glance at here, for I have handled it elsewhere at great length, in order to prove that Macbeth is Hamlet over again in every quality and every defect. Lady Macbeth is just as manifestly an embodiment of the strength and resolution of Shakespeare's mistress. In fact these are the dominant characteristics which he so admires in his "dark lady." Take sonnet 150:

> O, from what power hast thou this powerful might
> With insufficiency my heart to sway? . . .
> . . . . . .
> Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
> That in the very refuse of thy deeds
> There is such strength and warranties of skill
> That, in my mind, thy worst all best exceeds? . . .

But in spite of being closely connected with Shakespeare himself through both the hero and the heroine, *Macbeth* as a play lies on the confines of Shakespeare's activity: it reminds me of *Richard III.* The action is in no way suited to Shakespeare's character, and though he discovers his inmost feelings to us in the person of Macbeth, our sympathy is perpetually dammed by the conviction that this literary, lovable, humane, pious Shakespeare-Macbeth would not have murdered a fly, much less the kindly, courteous Duncan.

Lady Macbeth is not one of Shakespeare's happier creations. It is impossible to make a woman credible to us by lending her a man's resolution and courage. True, Lady Macbeth breaks down after the murder; but the fact is we know hardly anything about her. Did she even love Macbeth? She is merely a marble-hard outline like the heroine of a Greek tragedy.

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The interest of *Macbeth* is not so much the interest of character or even the interest of drama, though the action is exciting enough in all conscience and well developed, but the interest of divine poetry. Shakespeare has lent his *alter ego* Macbeth his own singing robe, and has embroidered it with magnificent lyric after lyric of his own disillusion and despair.

I have already discussed both *Lear* and *Timon* at considerable length elsewhere. Though the interest of these tragedies does not depend mainly on the portraiture of women, still the pictures of women in them throw light on the author's mental condition, and the intense passion of them is derived directly from Shakespeare's disappointments with his wanton mistress.

With that common sense which is the obverse of insight, Tolstoi has pointed out the faults in Lear: what a foolish old man, he says, not to have known his daughters better! It is just this foolish blindness which Shakespeare wishes to exaggerate in order to deepen for us the pathos of Lear's disproportionate punishment:

> . . . I am a man
> More sinned against than sinning.

I have been hotly criticised for speaking of the "erotic mania" which Shakespeare puts to view in *Lear*. But no milder words would render the intensity of my impression. Goneril and Regan are both wantons and both in heat for the base Edmund: Goneril in especial, by reason of her bold passion and resolution, reminds me of Lady Macbeth, and so at one remove recalls Shakespeare's dark mistress. She talks of her husband Albany, just as Lady Macbeth talked of her husband. Lady Macbeth said:

> Yet do I fear thy nature.
> It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
> To catch the nearest way.

And this Goneril speaks contemptuously of Albany's "milky gentleness," and declares that he will be:

> . . . more attask'd for want of wisdom
> Than praised for harmful mildness.

But it is not the unconditioned lechery of Goneril and Regan alone that gives *Lear* its character of "erotic mania." Nearly

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every character in the play talks bawd on every possible occasion, though it has nothing to do with the action and is wholly out of keeping with the seriousness of the tragedy.

Edmund the villain begins by attacking man's hypocrisy in attributing his own faults to "planetary influence"—"an admirable evasion of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish disposition to the charge of a star!" Then the fool, who is the mere embodiment of ordinary sense, loses no opportunity of showing the same bias: in the fifth scene of the first act he begins without provocation:

> She that's a maid now, and laughs at my departure,
> Shall not be a maid long, unless things be cut shorter.

Edgar too, who, as I have elsewhere shown, is another *alter ego* of Shakespeare himself, is almost as loose-lipped. He tells Lear he was a serving-man who "served the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her," and as if that were not enough, goes on to assert that he "out-paramoured the Turk," and finally warns poor old Lear, of all men in the world, to keep his "foot out of brothels" and his "hand out of plackets." And white-haired Lear himself, through whom Shakespeare speaks in the last acts as ingenuously as through Edgar, is obsessed with the same rank thoughts. When Gloucester asks:

> Is 't not the king?

Lear answers:

> Ay, every inch a king:
> When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
> I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?
> Adultery?
> Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No:
> The wren goes to 't, and the small gilded fly
> Does lecher in my sight.
> Let copulation thrive; for Gloucester's bastard son
> Was kinder to his father than my daughters
> Got 'tween the lawful sheets.
> To 't, luxury, pell-mell! for I lack soldiers.
> Behold yond simpering dame,
> Whose face between her forks presageth snow;
> That minces virtue, and does shake the head
> To hear of pleasure's name;
> The fitchew, nor the soiled horse, goes to 't
> With a more riotous appetite.

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Down from the waist they are Centaurs,
Though woman all above:
But to the girdle do the gods inherit,
Beneath is all the fiends';
There's hell, there's darkness, there's the sulphurous pit,

Burning, scalding, stench, consumption; fie, fie, fie! pah, pah! Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination. . . .

No wonder he begs for civet to sweeten his imagination. The whole subject is dragged in by the hair; it has nothing to do with his age or place or condition; in fact it is out of tune with all three. And Lear's next speech is just as bad:

Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind
For which thou whipp'st her. . . .

The truth is, his mistress' faithlessness has got on Shakespeare's nerves and his very thoughts are tainted with her wantonness: it is not his daughters' ingratitude that Lear-Shakespeare is thinking of any more than Hamlet was thinking of his mother's lechery, it is his faithless mistress who has infected the poet's imagination. Miss Fitton had got into Shakespeare's blood, and he gives Lear the very word for the obsession:

. . . a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle
In my corrupted blood. . . .

As if to convince us that this explanation is the true one, and that Shakespeare is always thinking of his wanton-mistress, the fool tells us that "he's mad who trusts in the tameness of a wolf . . . *a boy's love, or a whore's oath.*" The italics are mine.

The tragedy of *Lear* is based upon Shakespeare's understanding of his insane, blind trust in men and women; but the intense passion of the play, as I must insist again, springs from erotic mania, and from the consciousness that he is growing too old for love's lists. Perhaps Shakespeare's imagination never carried him higher than when Lear appeals to the heavens because they too are old:

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. . . O heavens,
If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause.

Timon breeds new thoughts in me; it is a poor play, and yet it increases my admiration of Shakespeare's wisdom, and in proportion diminishes my already chastened opinion of his commentators.

The poets and professors are all agreed that "large tracts of *Timon* are not the work of Shakespeare." The critics by trade have mapped it out indeed, ascribing these lines to him and those to some one else. Long ago I found reason to attribute much more of it to Shakespeare than was generally believed. But the incredible audacity of the professors, their unanimity, their serene conviction imposed on me; I believed for years that there must be some armature of truth to uphold the great jelly-like figure of assertion. I was first brought to doubt the teachers by the fact that in the very passages they all denied to Shakespeare, I found indubitable proof of his work. Time and a long experience of mandarin-methods have only strengthened and extended this belief.

The more I read *Timon* the more convinced I am that it is all Shakespeare's, and Shakespeare's alone, from beginning to end.

My readers, I think, will trust me now without proof; but as I go through the play selecting the most characteristic passages, I must just notice the fact that the very finest work is ascribed to the "unknown writer" by all the commentators. When these essays are reprinted in book form, I intend to take up *Timon* and show that the critics are unanimous in rejecting, not Shakespeare's vulgarities and inanities, but the gems of his thought, the rays of purest insight in him. *Timon* is all his, I say again deliberately. The weakest work in the play, the word disputes with Apemantus and others, are in his manner; the undramatic monotony of it is due to his exceeding bitterness of soul. For instance, Timon's gentlemen go to borrow for their lord: when they're refused, instead of smiling at their own wisdom in finding expectancy fulfilled, they curse the ungrateful

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friends in Timon's own vein. Life has so bruised Shakespeare that he is one ache; his very soul is sore. Love and friendship, which he held most sacred, have betrayed him; his friend has proved a vulgar cad, his love a wanton. The gold which he has always held in contempt, he now sees is the master-key of every lock in the world:

> This yellow slave *
> Will knit and break religions; bless the accursed,
> Make the hoar leprosy adored; place thieves
> And give them title, knee and approbation
> With senators on the bench: this is it
> That makes the wappen'd widow wed again;
> She, whom the spital-house and ulcerous sores
> Would cast the gorge at, this embalms and spices
> To the April day again. . . .

The disillusion bred new wisdom in Shakespeare. Instead of patriotism he has condemnation now for all countries; Alcibiades generalises the thought:

> 'Tis honour with most lands to be at odds.

Careless of character, Shakespeare lends his deepest ray of insight to a secondary person, the first Senator:

> He's truly valiant that can wisely suffer
> The worst that man can breathe † and make his wrongs
> His outsides, to wear them like his raiment carelessly
> And ne'er prefer his injuries to his heart,
> To bring it into danger.

But, like all the rest of us, Shakespeare's insight went further than his practice; he saw plainly that injuries should be taken lightly, but he could not help preferring them to his heart's health: *Timon* is one long moan of agony.

* It is hardly to be believed but this passage has been selected by Professor Herford as a specimen of the "unknown" collaborator's "facile rhetoric" and is contrasted with Shakespeare's "close-packed pregnant verses." (!)

† This is another passage denied to Shakespeare by all the commentators. It is one of the furthest throws of his thought; the pearl which he found in the depths, when the bitter waters of disillusion had quite gone over him: it opens a new chapter in modern morality. "Forgive your enemies," said paganism, because fighting with them will waste your time and energy. "Forget your injuries," says Shakespeare. On no account nurse them. Brooding over wrongs hardens the heart and degrades the nature. Take your buffets lightly; wear your wrongs as you do your garments—carelessly, for your own sake. Shakespeare's commentators have not seen all this, simply because they do not know him, are not on his level, and no man can see over his own head.

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The nature of Timon-Shakespeare's suffering cannot be mistaken : it is his men friends who betray Timon, but it is the women Timon chiefly rails against, the women who in the play have done him no wrong. It is outside the scope of the play to curse them ; the only explanation is that it was a woman who in life wounded Shakespeare most deeply. Just as Goneril and Regan are painted as hard, cruel, lustful prostitutes, so Phrynia and Timandra are here caricatured as the refuse of humanity, without any desire except for gold.

The erotic mania of Lear shrills in Timon to a scream :

> . . . strike me the counterfeit matron,—
> It is her habit only that is honest,
> Herself's a bawd : let not the virgin's cheek
> Make soft thy trenchant sword. . . .

And again :

> Consumptions sow
> In hollow bones of man ; strike their sharp shins,
> And mar men's spurring. Crack the lawyer's voice,
> That he may never more false title plead,
> Nor sound his quillets shrilly : hoar the flamen,
> That scolds against the quality of flesh,
> And not believes himself : down with the nose,
> Down with it flat ; take the bridge quite away
> Of him that, his particular to foresee,
> Smells from the general weal : make curl'd-pate ruffians bald ;
> And let the unscarr'd braggarts of the war
> Derive some pain from you : plague all ;
> That your activity may defeat and quell
> The source of all erection. . . .

His madness knows no distinction : "the damned earth" even is the

> . . . common whore of mankind,* that put'st odds
> Among the rout of nations . . .

But even in *Timon* Shakespeare shows himself impressionable-quick and most generous. As soon as Timon finds his steward honest, he throws off his misanthropy and cries :

> . . . . .
> Forgive my general and exceptless rashness
> You perpetual-sober gods ! I do proclaim
> One honest man. . . .

* This passage, too, is attributed to the " unknown writer " by the cry of critics.

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This sharp return on himself with its superb expression is denied to Shakespeare by all commentators; yet there is nothing in all his works more characteristic.

These critics all suffer from Germanic stodginess. One instance may stand for a thousand. Shakespeare found two epitaphs attributed to Timon: one in which Timon declares he will be nameless, the other gives his name: both are characteristic:

> Here lies a wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft:
> Seek not my name: a plague consume you wicked caitiffs left!
>
> . . . . .
>
> Here lie I, Timon; who, alive, all living men did hate:
> Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass and stay not here thy gait.

Shakespeare put both these epitaphs in, one after the other: he does not seem to have minded the contradiction in them: he probably saw it and intended to correct it, and then forgot all about it; but the commentators have buzzed about it ever since, and from this high and rank morsel have dragged infected feet over the whole play: "Two hands," they cry, "two hands plainly at work." Two hands if you will, gentlemen, but both manifestly Shakespeare's.

All through these five tragedies, except perhaps in *Othello*, we have been moving on the outskirts, so to speak, of the tornado of Shakespeare's passion. Now we come to the storm-centre. Shakespeare has been deceived again and again by the woman he loved: what picture does he paint of her? It is the question of questions for him and for us. By his answer we shall be able to measure his very soul. Tortured, cheated, betrayed, his vanity wounded to the quick, his affection scorned, the best in him despised;—if he can still keep his soul intact and render righteous judgment—paint her as she was, the good as well as the evil—then in him, on this artist side at least, and there is no higher, we touch the zenith of humanity.

He was able to reach this height about the false friend Herbert, who had stolen his love from him. Shakespeare pictures Herbert-Bertram for us very fairly; he shows us first Bertram's impatient eagerness to leave the court: the boy-

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fighter will not be a squire of dames, "the forehorse to a smock," as he himself puts it; he will risk the King's displeasure and go to the wars. And when in the field, he wins golden opinions on all sides: Diana even, who rejects his suit, tells us that "they say the French Count has done most honourable service," and the widow replies that he has "taken their greatest commander and with his own hand he slew the Duke's brother." Bertram then, though young, is a born soldier of proved courage, as the English aristocrat often is.

True, Shakespeare puts in the shadows, purple-black shadows to balance these high lights: Bertram has a low opinion of women, is inexpressibly coarse and common, but we feel that the portrait of him is a fair one, astonishingly true to life in its mingled good and evil.

Was Shakespeare as fair to Mary Fitton? Bertram-Herbert, we know, betrayed him "in the wanton way of youth." But why was Mary Fitton faithless? From what we know of Shakespeare we should be inclined to guess that he would ascribe Miss Fitton's preference of others to snobbishness. He will lay the flattering unction to his soul, we imagine, that she preferred Herbert because he was a lord of great place. But no! this is not even hinted. Manifestly Mary Fitton was well born enough, confident enough in herself and her superb womanhood, to judge all men, peers, and players alike, on the human level. She must have been a great creature; for not to be a snob in England is a rarer distinction than any title. The next disability that would occur to Shakespeare would naturally be his age. Mary Fitton is young, he might say, and therefore prefers young courtiers to old mummers. But his Othello expressly asks himself this question and answers it:

> . . . or for I am declined
> Into the vale of years—yet that's not much.

And in fact it was "not much"; for when Shakespeare first met Mistress Fitton, though she was only seventeen or eighteen, he was only thirty-three. It is true that when *Othello* was written the discrepancy showed worse: she was twenty-four and he was nearly forty; still "that's not much" we are inclined to echo. Why, then, did the maid of honour prefer this lord

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and that knight to Shakespeare, who adored her? Was the fault all Mary Fitton's? Was it all due to her sensuality? Shakespeare says so and the evidence against her at first blush seems overwhelming. At the very first sight of her as Rosaline in *Romeo and Juliet* he credits her with Dian's wit and cold chastity; but immediately afterwards, as Rosaline again in *Love's Labour's Lost*, he declares her to be a wanton:

> Ay, and by heaven, one that will do the deed
> Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard.

Again and again through Biron, Bertram, and others, he attributes to her this cunning outside of cold pride, gilding mere wantonness. The combination is so uncommon that it might alone serve to identify his mistress as readily as her white complexion and pitch-black eyes. But allowing Mary Fitton to have been as sensual as a monkey, she must still have had some preferences: does Shakespeare mark any? How does he explain to himself his own conquest of her? Just before he met her he was always boasting, as we saw:

> That man that hath a tongue, I say, is no man,
> If with his tongue he cannot win a woman.

Was it his honeyed flatteries seduced her or his handsome person or his devotion? Did she know that she was beloved by the greatest man in the world? Did she divine on his forehead the crown of crowns? Or was she too far below him to have any inkling of the truth, as Fanny Brawne was too far below Keats? Above all, why, loving her, did Shakespeare fail to hold her? We must now see if any or all of these riddles may be answered.

Whatever the answer may be, it must be looked for in his last portraits of his wonderful gipsy; in *Troilus and Cressida* and in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Before considering these plays let us first glance back over the way we have come.

(*To be continued*)

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The Japanese-British Exhibition

By Professor Robert H. Smith

SELDOM has any European or American people, and never before has any Asiatic people, made so thorough and earnest an effort to prove to the outside world what it is worth as has the Japanese this year at Shepherd's Bush.

The lighter attractions are in good taste and interesting—quite a unique experience in side-shows—while the serious and solid exhibits are of such deep interest and many of such high beauty that all who wish to understand the present-day movement of the world are bound to spend time and thought upon their study. This exhibition is a final and convincing demonstration that the Japanese race is about to exercise important influence throughout the whole of civilised mankind. It will not depend upon the Japanese alone whether that influence will be wholly for the good of the world. The rest of the leading races must understand this if they intend to reap solely benefit and no evil from the resurrection and modern enlightenment of this very ancient civilisation of a very gifted people.

On the lighter sort of exhibits we will here touch very shortly only where we conceive there to be a meaning unfamiliar to us Westerns and carrying a permanent lesson for us. One sixpenny side-show is a little Japanese village, catalogued as Picturesque Japan, and intended to represent old rural Japan. This is a difficult thing to re-create in London, and we heartily regret that, partly through great incompleteness, this village dismally fails to produce the right impression. This old rural Japan had many great charms, and in it were to be found the germs and the reasons of Japan's greatness as a nation. The industry, the untiring hard labour, the intimate, sure knowledge of all farm and other local affairs, the art of being happy, courteous,

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and hospitable under severe, often cruel, conditions, the universal appreciation of the necessity of whole-hearted loyalty to the community, and of respect and obedience to the discipline of the chosen authorities, these are the qualities that make national success a sure thing, and their most thorough, because most simple and elemental, incarnation is seen in the far-away plains and forests and mountains of Japan.

On the other side of the grounds is another sixpenny enclosure called " Fair Japan," where the town life, apart from the modern factory, is very successfully depicted. Here are found in operation many kinds of superior hand skill. Here we see the keen intelligence of the artisan, his ingenuity in fashioning a great variety of tools for each special purpose and detail of his work, his elaborate and patient care to keep all these tools in a state of perfect efficiency. Here there is not such hard continuous working capacity; there is more of frivolity and indulgence in frequent rest and talk; but there is the same patient thoroughness and determination—resolve is hardly the correct term because it is innate and almost unconscious, and the opposite idea never comes into existence—the same fixed purpose to carry all things to minute correct completion in every detail.

The Ainu and the Formosan villages and the Korean exhibition illustrate the difficulties with lower, some of them even completely savage, races that this go-ahead Eastern Government has to deal with, and the statistics in another department of the exhibition prove the fairly satisfactory success of their methods of gradually raising these races and introducing them to at least the beginnings of civilisation.

Between the Uxbridge Road and the Wood Lane entrance to the exhibition the long series of *mises en scène* representing winter, spring, summer, and autumn are a brave attempt to let us understand the peculiar characteristics and beauties of Japanese scenery. With the help of a little intelligent imagination and making allowance for the differences between paper, canvas, cardboard, and paint under cover in London, and blossoms, leaves, moss, and rocks under a free sky of luminous brilliance, one can obtain here a true idea of the uniquely picturesque Nature under which this artistic nation has been reared. This

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is helped by a great number of cleverly framed large-sized coloured photographs on the walls of the neighbouring corridors. And to the left of the "Court of Honour" lies the "Garden of Peace," an extensive tract of ground laid out in lakes, rockeries, and hillocks in true Japanese garden style. Farther up the ground is another smaller hill-and-lake garden of different form. These have not fully realised the hopes of their designers, because many of the flowering and other trees and shrubs brought over from Japan have failed to recover from the malign effects of the voyage, by reason of the very cold and rainy spring weather that has prevailed here this year. But even so, without any of the proper luxuriance of blossom and leafage, they demonstrate satisfactorily the immense superiority of this rock-and-water gardening to anything we have invented in Europe. The old English walled garden massed with flowered arbours is sweet and delightful; Chatsworth Park is noble; the Parc Monceau in Paris compels one to linger in its beautiful undulating glades, and this last is the climax of European skill in gardening. But not even the Parc Monceau, which has cradled the finest *belles-lettres* of France, suggests remotely the ideas inspired by a fine Japanese garden. Much has been written lately about the Japanese rules and science of garden design. Many formal and pedantically learned treatises on the subject have been evolved from the brains of Japanese philosophers and scientists, just as they have produced similar innumerable volumes upon flower arrangements, upon decorative paintings, on humoristic sketching, upon the games of chess and "go," upon women's and children's dress. But these are the results of the philosophers' analyses of the creations of others, analyses carried to extravagant extremes of geometrical nicety, aiming at a formalism which could only destroy the soul of true art genius. The general idea, purpose, and method are alone of essential importance. The Japanese inhabit a country of gigantic mountains; of gloomy rugged pine forests covering precipitous craggy slopes; of broad valleys and narrow yawning ravines through which run mighty rivers in thunderous cascades and raging along scores of miles of rocky beds, with profusion of brilliant flowers and blossom everywhere on plain and mountain side, with every tint of summer and ruddy autumn foliage; of

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snow and rain-torrents; of whirlwinds; of translucent electrically exhilarating atmosphere; of blinding sunshine and brilliant moonlight, with a wealth of angry and tender cloud effects unsurpassed even in our damp climate; a country in innumerable aspects romantically beautiful. This romance of Nature, the soul of scenic art, has become embedded in the Japanese heart and mind. It is only the philosophers who can analyse it into so many rules of three. But every Japanese understands it, however inarticulately; his life basks in its inspiration. Without its joy and its wildness, life would be not worth living to him. The whole purpose of the Japanese garden is to help keep up this inspiration away from actual contact with the lovely wilderness. It helps the house men and women to dream; it rears the children in a noble dream ideal: a dream of distant mountains, forests, lakes, and rivers. The degree of its excellence is measured by its success in inspiring such dreams. A Japanese garden inspires dreams of wild Japan; but the principles of Japanese gardening are applicable to all countries, and the results of such application ought to vary with the general character of the scenery of the country. Again, one might wish in England a Swiss garden: it would be one to compel us to dream vividly of our rambles in Switzerland. The design and creation of such a garden requires inbred and cultivated technical skill and long experience of garden effects. It also requires particular knowledge of the kind of wild Nature to be dreamt about. It can never result in square and round patches of flower-beds, or in straight gravel walks, or in flat plots of turf. It is to be hoped that this exhibition will influence European garden art; but it is also to be hoped that our gardeners will not set themselves to precise copying of Japanese garden designs, and that they will not attempt to produce dreams of countries of whose natural scenery they have no personal knowledge.

The history of Japan is illustrated in at least four distinct portions of the exhibition. Behind the great Nara Gate at the Wood Lane entrance are placed eleven life-sized dressed-figure tableaux showing the dresses and habits of eleven typical periods, beginning about 600 B.C. These are well done and are very interesting. For instance, in the early periods there appear

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musical instruments, among them the harp, of forms now quite unknown outside museums. This harp curiously resembles the legendary Irish harp and the old Greek harp. Again, at early dates Chinese influence in dress and in fashion of carriage is very apparent. It was, of course, from China direct, and through Korea, that Buddhism came to Japan, and that a knowledge of the higher forms of philosophy, such as Taoism and Confucianism, was reached by the then only peoples who had begun to exchange wildness for civilisation and the arts of peace. In spite of Japanese Governmental imposition of Shinto upon its people, Europeans should not be deprived of the knowledge that Buddhism has been overwhelmingly the greatest religious and humanising influence that has moulded Japanese character. Shinto has only survived by amalgamation of formal ceremonies and popular legend with Buddhist ritual. Neither has ever influenced the high learning and cultured thought of the country, which has always been dominated by Confucianism and its parent philosophies. But the free, wild nature worship of Shinto has never lost its moderating influence, because it is native to the soil; and although all that is soft and graceful and gentle in Japanese art owes its birth to Buddhism in the Nara and Heian periods, the warlike centuries of Kamakura, Momoyama, and Tokugawa have probably been of great service to the nation in preserving and developing the independent and patriotic spirit of the land upon which depends so much of its noble capacity for self-sacrifice and hardy endurance. To Shinto the country owes the maintenance of the Sword and the Cherry Blossom; to Buddhism it owes all its refinement of intellectual and æsthetic culture and of social custom, its decency and graceful dignity of mediæval dress, and that exquisiteness of fine art best symbolised in the blossoms of the wistaria, the iris, and the lotus. The last of the eleven pictures, *Japan of To-day*, is in the last degree melancholy in its truthful representation of the utter vulgarity which too many living Japanese identify with modern civilisation.

In the Government War Department of the exhibition there is found, perhaps, the most complete and authentic record of one part of the life of the nation. In one of its sections are many models, finished with all the nice skill of the Japanese

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artisan, of naval and mercantile junks of successive dates, gradually, and in recent times very quickly, merging into the huge mail and merchant steamers and battleships of this last decade. Our engineers ought not to miss noting that skill in shipbuilding, on lines yielding the least possible water resistance, was developed in Japan at far earlier dates than in Western Europe ; while the marvellous rapidity with which they have created engineering plant in their own country and entirely under their own control for the building of the largest and most fully equipped vessels, not less efficient for all modern purposes than our own, is a warning that we must brace ourselves to most strenuous effort to keep pace with them in the future. The Army section of this war exhibition has equal historical interest in its collections of weapons and armour of all periods ; although here, so far as *matériel* is concerned, we do not fancy that there is much to learn as regards present or future evolution. If the Japanese surpass us in the future in the art of war, it will certainly be in tactics, and in the philosophy of war, namely, the conviction that "war is war," and that when we begin to fight we begin to slay and be slain and must not shirk cruel and ghastly sacrifice of life and agony on the field and in the ruined homes both of ourselves and of our enemies. Modern wars in Europe have begun without this conviction and without realisation of the consequences, and have invariably been ended by the gradual recognition that these consequences are intolerable and that the original purposes of the war must be to a large extent abandoned on both sides in order to avoid the ultimate consequences of war.

Again, the exhibit of the Government Education Department has much historic interest. There is here a remarkable series of portraits of the famous scholars, historians, poets, novel-writers, and philosophers of thirteen centuries of Japanese literary activity. Each of these is individually characteristic, and we should be glad to feel assured that they are authentic likenesses. The highly cultivated art of poetry is in Japan utterly unlike in style to anything we have ever had in Europe. In one respect, namely, in play or pun upon the written forms of words, it will never be translatable, and if it were so, we would

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not appreciate highly its merit, admired in a, to us, incomprehensible degree, by native scholars. But in one other respect, namely, in extreme brevity and condensed suggestiveness of not expressed or only half expressed beautiful ideas, we hope that before long some volumes of translated samples may be laid before us for criticism. Novel, or novelette, writing is another art long ago brought to a high pitch of excellence in realism of detail and in rich genuine humour. To make it palatable to a large *clientèle* it has been flavoured with elements of weird fantasticality and also with moral homily. Since the recent creation of an extensive educated public, the nation has had no time to try its hand at the higher novel-writing art such as has existed for a century back in England, France, Italy, and Russia. It is well to note that among the old-time linguistic scholars of Japan there existed some who studied Sanscrit literature and lore.

Underneath this series of portraits is ranged a longer series of pictures of historic scenes intended to illustrate "Bushido," the Spirit of Shinto. They do so in a somewhat inane fashion, and one has heard *ad nauseum* so much of this hysterical self-laudation that one regrets that the Japanese Government should imagine that its perpetration in London should have a chance of favourable appreciation.

In this department most interesting is the evidence given of the great intellectual activity of the universities in mechanical invention, in civil engineering, in chemical, biological, and medical research. Similar evidence of the splendid work done in the secondary and elementary schools, down to the kindergarten grade, is very gratifying. In the girls' elementary schools, one of the best exercises is the dressing of dolls, every doll, large or small, of high or low social degree, child, adult, or old-aged, having to be dressed with scrupulous care correctly as to form and colour and stuff in every small detail. In the "Women's Work" section we find interesting information regarding the management and mode of life in modern factories, which we trust is strictly truthful.

Again, in the Fine Art Palace there is much to be learnt of the history of Nippon. First noticed is a series of exquisitely wrought models of great architectural triumphs, chiefly temples.

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Three of these are of the seventh century; the others of the tenth, thirteenth, fourteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. It was not until the tenth century that there appeared the first signs of efforts to throw off the influence of the atrociously inartistic styles of Chinese temple design with their fantastic and impertinent upward twirled roof-curves and vulgar ostentation of heavy overlarded ornamentation, and their meaningless carroty sky-spikes. About the thirteenth century, seemingly, there had been reached practical perfection in the grave, solemn, reverential, simple-outlined style of the purely and uniquely Japanese Buddhist architecture. No comparison can be made between these and the cathedral masterpieces of Europe. They are too wholly unlike. The former could never inspire the passionate enthusiasm of devout religious feeling and purely artistic admiration aroused by so many of the latter. They do not aim at doing so. Their purpose is entirely different, and may be described as severely and graciously Puritanic. They call the people to simplicity of life and thought, to gentle and obedient conduct; they lead away from everything gross, material, rich, and passionate towards dependence upon the purely spiritual. The upright pillars and horizontal sole and roof beams are massively strong and gracefully plain; only on a few of the beams under the eaves is there some simple carving. The great, long, wide sweep of the roof is splendidly impressive to one who does not thirst after intricacy and ornament; its curve is sufficiently marked to eliminate the ugly effect of straightness from any and every point of view, but the curve is gentle and modest and nowhere cocks itself into flippant tortuosity. In the small model of the thirteenth-century "Drum of the Toshudaiji" temple in the exhibition the best form of this curve is seen: it is precisely the same as in the best temples of to-day; no improvement has been effected since that date. Japanese Buddhism is not pure Buddhism, not unmitigated pessimism. It is an amalgam with Shinto. It supplies the humility and charitable graciousness with which to temper the proud and somewhat savage fanaticism of the Shinto spirit; but this latter saves it from despairing of humanity and human excellence.

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The next gallery of the Fine Art Palace is devoted to ancient temple images, most of them lent direct from the temple treasuries. Perhaps the most remarkable is a "Door of an Eighth-century Bronze Lantern" from the Todaiji Temple. This is a small barred gate, the centre of which is filled by the figure of a well-developed woman in flowing robes and playing a reed flute. Here the bold, free, and true drawing of the drapery and of the figure and the lively natural expressiveness of the face are admirable. There is nothing ascetic about either figure or pose. The piece is well worthy of being set against the best triumphs of Florentine art, and, if the date given is the true one, is certainly surprising. The facial expression is in marked contrast to that of the great bulk of Japanese temple statuary. From the ninth century we have here two wooden large-sized images of the Sun Goddess Kwannon, in which that from the Daigoji Temple also shows fine free drapery, and both of which have much gracious life in the face. Again, several bronze Buddhas of the seventh century show the saint in strangely unusual attitudes and display vigorous action. Apparently it was not until some centuries later that in this Shinto land the Buddha attained the deadly quiet beatitude with absolutely blank countenance with which every one is familiar. Not until the ninth century did Kwannon herself, Goddess of Mercy and Forgiveness, become wholly peaceful and benevolent. These pacifying agencies were for centuries disturbed by the ferocious companionship of devas such as we see here with haloes round their heads but with arrows and swords in hand, and of such angry gods as the two Bishamonten, Gods of War, of the tenth and thirteenth centuries, trampling on the backs of conquered devils and flourishing unrelenting spears. If one studies the fiendish faces of many of these governors of the universe and the ghoulish horrors of hell as depicted upon many both Buddhist and Shinto kakemono, one can understand the grateful sense of relief with which humanity was at last permitted to observe the Buddha settling down on his lotus leaf and peacock back to an eternity of lifeless resignation.

The next hall is filled with kakemono of ancient date, lent

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by the Imperial Household, many of the Daimyo, and rich Japanese connoisseurs. The supply of these is too great to admit of all being shown at once: the exhibit is being changed once a fortnight (every other Sunday) throughout the summer. This change has also the advantage of concentrating proper attention upon these rare works of art, among which are several originals of Hokusai. Except for the fine line-drawing and the high quality of the colours, the merits of these much-valued pictures are too technical to be appreciated by many of the visitors. In the neighbouring room are exhibited many old masks and dresses used by the actors in the old "Nō" dramas, which are descriptive of the legendary mythology of Nippon, and which are still played in special theatres in the ancient language intelligible to less than a small fraction of one per cent. of the people. For the most part the actors are mute and the story is chanted by a chorus usually hidden but sometimes ranged along the back of the stage. The forms of the dresses and the stuffs of which they are made evince none of the beauties that delight us in less remote Japanese art. But the exhibits of first-class lacquers in the forms of "inro" (the tiny nests of boxes in which every one of good breeding carries a supply of medicines about with him to ward off the disastrous effects of society banquets), of writing boxes, and of ladies' toilet boxes, must be a source of great delight to all who value dainty workmanship and artistic design. Proceeding further, we find shelves of ivory, wood, bronze and iron carving. Needless to comment upon the fine work in these small ivory pieces, fishermen, a boy hunting butterflies, a girl catching a cock; their style and beauties have been long known to Europeans. The wood-carving is less familiar, and the skill shown in it is quite equal to the other. If one examines the group of *A Watchman and a Torch-carrier*, the *Poetess looking over a quiet Evening Sky*, and *The Fencer*, respectively by the artists Yamazaki, Yonehara, and Hirakushi, one learns what marvellous life and facial expression can be put into such small size and such apparently unpromising material. The small bronze pieces are no less admirable and wholly belie the calumny that the art of working in bronze is decaying in Japan. The woman nursing

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her baby at the breast is a specially delicate piece of high art. Wonderful work is also to be seen in some iron *repoussé* figures of groups of bears, monkeys and dogs.

But it is the silk pictures that evoke the most unstinted praise. Those in cut velvet constitute a comparatively new phase of Japanese art, the idea learnt recently in Europe, but already brought to a high pitch of excellence as applied to Japanese subjects. Three very good illustrations of it by the Iida Company are large pictures of a *Cherry Tree in Blossom*, *Venice*, and the *Rocky Mountains*. The first especially shows a luxuriance of colour and delicate toning truly admirable. In Japanese estimation the embroidery representing the Sun Goddess after giving birth to her child the Earth (that is, Japan, with a few accidental ragged odds and ends scattered about the focus of light and enlightenment) is the marvel of the exhibition. The artist is Sugawara Naonasuhi. It occupied him nine years, and over 3000 colours and tints of silk thread are used in the composition. A *Nō Dance* is barbaricly rich in its brilliant colours and tremendously vigorous in design. This is also by Sugawara. The landscape *Kinkakuji*, one of the ancient and famous rural pleasure-houses of the Mikado, is most artistically wrought by Tanaka Rishichi, who also has a very charming snow landscape. Nishimura Sozaemon has produced a moonlight sky scene, entitled *Moon and Grasses*, which is perhaps the most poetically perfect design in this part of the exhibition. There is nothing in it beyond the moon and the sky with a few light clouds along with three or four blades of flowering grass rising from the unseen earth, and one of which is blown across the edge of the moon's disc. Nothing so simple in composition and yet so lovely in effect, so calm and peaceful and yet alive with the motion of the clouds and of the grasses, so delicate in shading of the detail, and of such decided but unexaggerated contrast between the brilliance of the pure moonlight and the dark grey blue of parts of the sky, is conceivable in any kind of picture other than this silk embroidery.

On the other side of the grounds in the Textile Palace is found what is really an extension of the Fine Art Palace, and here again may be seen great numbers of superb silk embroideries.

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Here also Tanaka excels greatly in a delightful forest scene with a stony stream running through its middle, and a patch of distant light grey sky as principal focus. Still more striking is his high folding screen with geese craning their necks through a bamboo fence. Surely those geese are alive and waddling clumsily about and those bamboo posts are several feet in front of the rest. Then the *Waterfall*, the *Chinese Pug Dog*, the *Stag* on the hill-top in black night, of Nishimura, are astonishing in their delicate careful workmanship; and his large screen showing the edge of a sea-beach over which are dashing tremendous dark green breakers with just a glimpse of the stormy sea over the tops of these breakers is a conception of true genius and a marvel of technical skill in workmanship.

These great works of silk art cannot be compared with the masterpieces of European painting, because our greatest pictures deal with subjects which would never, and probably could never, be tackled by a Japanese artist. But in their own line, namely, the truthful and intense representation of what is lovely in Nature apart from man, no European work has ever equalled those extraordinary silk embroideries from Japan. The old embroideries of Japan were practically perfect in quality of colour and in harmonious blending of colours; but they were merely decorative, they never aimed at anything artistically great in subject, and when landscape was attempted the want of true perspective always prevented the attainment of high picture merit. All such elements of weakness have disappeared in these last few years under the influence of the modern education given in the Government Art Schools, and Japan now leads the world in superlatively delightful landscape and animal pictures of at least this one class.

No space is left to mention the elaborately carved cabinet work. It is very good and well deserves the attention of connoisseurs in art furniture; but in regard to art in general it has not the same importance as what we have written of above.

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Siena

By Edward Hutton

I THINK perhaps there is nothing in the world quite like Siena, no other place, at any rate, that has just her gift of expression, her quality of joy, of passion, of sheer loveliness. It is true that in Florence you find a clear intellectual beauty, virile and full of light, that in Assisi, that little superterrestrial city in Umbria, a mysterious charm—is it the beauty of holiness ?—will discover itself to you in the memory of a love, still faintly immortal, pathetically reminding you of itself, like the fragrance of a wild flower on that rude mountain-side. But in Siena you have something more than these, something more human and not less divine—how shall I say ?—you have everything that the heart can desire : a situation lofty and noble, an aspect splendid and yet ethereal, a history brave, impetuous and unfortunate, a people still living, yet still unspoiled by strangers. Yes, Siena set so firmly on her triune hill towers there even to-day with a gesture of joy, radiant and beautiful, caught about by her vineyards as with a kirtle of green, girdled with silver and gold, the silver of her olives mixed with the gold of her corn.

It is thus she always seems to me when I come to her ; it is thus I always remember her from afar, a place of happiness, of welcome, a fortress still it is true, but without a threat, a fortress dismantled, in the hands of invincible peace, where every tower has become a dwelling-house, every bastion a garden, every bulwark a shady walk, where the gates are open wide that the children may run in and out.

Come to her any spring morning from Florence where something *furba*, something even surly in the people might seem to bear witness to the foreign domination there, and she will win you at once ; a certain sparkle and sweet glitter in the light, even without

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the gates, proclaims the hills and lifts up your heart; and long before you have passed half-way down Via Cavour, the charm of the place has fallen upon you, almost in spite of yourself, unreasonably too, for you will never be able to decide just what it is that has caught you or to define in what her delight consists—that strange delight that is so joyful and yet half afraid.

Is it in her aloofness, her aspect of conscious life, her unity, her individuality, the city built as it were in one piece climbing up out of every valley to support the cathedral about which it crowds so tumultuously, sharply divided from the country which the walls scarcely thrust back? Is it in the architecture, its conscious grace, the sheer beauty of form and colouring so consoling after the philistinism of Florence? Or is it in the people, their speech so pure that any other seems like a dialect, their manners, their noble bearing, their fine courtesy; so that you discern in them at once the aristocracy of Italy? Or is it in the beauty of the women—and there are no such women anywhere else in Italy as these pale, wilful, sweet ladies who pass and repass up and down Via Cavour in the twilight with a mother or a husband or a sturdy little maid for company or protection? Or is it in the laughter of the children so fresh and so delicious in the cool green of the Lizza, which you may hear any golden morning and can never forget since it is the one thing which reminds you of home.

It is, perhaps, in all these things together and a thousand beside which your heart takes note of, though you be all unaware, that the charm of Siena lies. Moreover with her alone among the great towns of Italy, something of reverence for the past has survived the tide of modern barbarism, so that she is not ashamed to be reminded of her ancient greatness or of her fathers which begat her.

The modern spirit, a mean utilitarianism, has stolen away the universal beauty of Rome, is even now overthrowing Venice, and has rebuilt and ruined Florence, nor is its progress through the lesser cities of Italy less appalling: but Siena it has not really touched, she remains perfectly herself. Dedicated to the Virgin she is the one virgin city of Italy, an inviolate tower, *Turris Eburnea*, which the modern beastliness has been unable to smutch.

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Perhaps it is in this we find a good part of our delight. No electric trams rush through her beautiful mediæval streets, which are still lined with palaces splendid and severe, not separated from the lesser houses but joined to them with only here and there a narrow opening through which you see a vista of steep lofty narrow way under an arch that goes suddenly and swiftly down into the valley or winds slowly uphill, where the wind dashes madly to and fro or sighs wearily in the darkness, where only a single star maybe has ever peeped. All these streets that tunnel and climb and wind so narrowly and steeply through the city are at once lively and quiet, lively by reason of the children who play in them, the women who gossip in their shadowy doorways, the pedlars and hawkers who cry their wares between their ancient echoing walls. The only traffic that passes up and down these paved narrow twisting climbing ways is the *baroccio* of a charcoal-burner, the asses of a woodsman laden with timber from the mountains, or the great waggons drawn by drowsy white oxen whose horns almost touch the houses on either side the narrow ways as they draw slowly home the burden of wine from the vineyard. Yes, they are quiet enough, those narrow ways, only never silent, echoing every now and then with the musical cries of pedlars above the voices of many women mixed with the laughter, the inarticulate cries of babies, of children. And there in and out, now hidden by a tower or shut out by a high roof, the sun peeps down and the shadows advance and recede, and over all between the tall houses is a strip of the soft sky.

It is much the same with the one great street of Siena, which, lined with little shops, runs quite through the city, entering at the Porta Camollia on the north and leaving by the Porta Romana on the south, the Via Francigena indeed, though within the walls it is called by various names, the great mediæval highway of Italy leading from the far north to Rome.

Here the ancient noises of life, so individual in the narrow steep ways, are mingled together and broken really for the first time by the sound of wheels. You come into this clamour on your way from Porta Camollia where the Via delle Belle Arti turns downhill on the right. A mere vague rumour at first, it waxes louder and louder, resolving itself at last into the hum of

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many voices, till in front of the Loggia dei Nobili, where a great crowd conducts its business in the street, you come really into the midst of it and are surprised when having pushed your way through these busy, cheerful people, in less than twenty yards you find yourself alone again in that paved way between the tall sober palaces, almost in silence.

But though it be in her streets, those narrow lofty by-ways, that Siena is still living and to be found, it is not in them she has set up her pride. All the nobility, all the impetuous ardour and valour of Siena, for the most part unrepresented or at least largely invisible in her streets, are to be found in the Campo, that beautiful piazza, shaped like a sea-shell, before which stands the rosy Palazzo Pubblico over which rises the loveliest tower in Italy, La Mangia. This is the true forum of the city and in its light, its fantastic and lovely shape, in the dizzy and noble height of that tower, all that is most characteristic of Siena might seem to be hidden and expressed. Yet that palace, that piazza, that tower stand less conspicuous in any view of Siena from the walls or the *contado* than the cathedral which, set on a spur of the great triune hill on which Siena stands, shines like some precious casket or tabernacle far over the countryside, the capitol of the City of the Virgin. Nothing in Siena becomes her so well, or so certainly sums her up as her cathedral into which, in its aloofness, its pride, its distinction, its beauty and broken ambition the history of the city seems to have passed. It is perfectly set in a great silent space, a miracle of light, and though its façade is disappointing and inexpressive the Duomo of Siena is something more than a barn before which a miracle has been performed as at Orvieto. As seen from the Lizza it is like some celestial citadel, the long, exquisite line of the nave broken by the perfect transept and the great octagon over it. Look at it from Fontebranda, whence the houses rise one above another and the whole city seems to be gathered about that hill-side to be crowned by that marvellous diadem of pale gold bound with onyx or chalcedony, the fair campanile towering above the whole city pointing to the sky. But splendid as the Duomo is in almost any view of it, from S. Barbara and Fontebranda or from the great piazza which lies so spacious about it, it is from within that it most truly

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shines. No one, I suppose, who has ever beheld the precious romanesque of that nave has failed to be comforted by the distinction and beauty of its colouring, the strength and majesty of its style, the nobility of the lantern over the crossing. It is here and in those great lean churches S. Domencio, S. Francesco, and the Servi di Maria no less than in the altar-pieces of Duccio and the pictures of Simone Martini and the Lorenzetti that we have symbols of Siena, that we learn, indeed, what Siena is.

For in her strangely ardent, almost pathetic beauty there is a mystery, something we do not wholly understand, something Byzantine perhaps, an exquisite finish too, an elaborate ornament which belong to the earliest painters of miniatures. Often at evening looking on her from S. Barbara when the world is so quiet and in the dim valleys and on the clear hill-sides the grey olives are a mist of silver, the cypresses very still and dark against the blue and gold of the sky, suddenly she has seemed to me, piled up so closely house over house, church over church, tower over tower, culminating in that almost visionary Duomo, like a city out of a Missal, one of those exquisite, unreal places past which the Magi came to Bethlehem, the very city at whose gate S. Anne waited so long for Joachim, in whose valleys Christ was baptized by John, against whose battlements of old was set the Crucifixion.

Yes, there is an element not wholly explicable in the beauty of Siena, an element of strangeness, of wonder which we must confess we do not wholly understand. As she stands there on her triune hill dreaming of the Middle Age she seems more than a city, more than the work of man; for she expresses something that is hidden from us, that we can only guess at dimly as we gaze over her profound valleys, across the garden of her *contado* to the desert on whose verge she waits on guard.

Is it just that perhaps—that which day by day as you abide with her comes at last to impress you most, to mix with your every thought of her and in some dim way to inform her with itself—is it that which is her secret? She stands on the edge of the wilderness and looks all day long across a vast desolation to the faint far-away outline of a great mountain, the most beautiful mountain in Tuscany, Mont' Amiata.

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It is this spectacle so profound, moving and expressive that little by little grows into your heart as you pass up and down the steep winding narrow streets from church to church, from palace to palace, from sanctuary to sanctuary. Joyful and yet half afraid I said of her, and it is so. The smiling gay persuasive loveliness of Siena is set against the solemnity of that beautiful mountain, against the barren loneliness of that desert, out of whose virile and mysterious beauty she has sprung up like a rare and delicate flower. It is this contrast which as it seems to me lends her half her charm. On the verge of that vast country of scarred rock and channelled clay where the sun is without pity and there is no sound or song, she seems more human in her beauty than in fact she is. For with all her happiness and joy she is aware of the loneliness that is about her, she never forgets the bitterness of the desert or the silence of the mountains on which she must look all day long. You will find them, their influence, everywhere, not only in herself, in the city we see to-day, but in her history, in everything she has done. For in her story as in her work, the great altar-piece of Duccio, for instance, the lovely spell-bound pictures of Simone Martini, the flower-like panels of Sassetta, her vast cold Duomo, her dizzy Mangia tower, there is that element of strangeness without which it is true there is no excellent beauty, but which here seems to be almost its chief characteristic. How sensitive they are to that silent country out of which they are sprung, they have understood the mystery of that desert and have drawn from its lean strength a curious sweetness.

Nor is it only in material things such as these that we find that element, but in her history also and in those who made it, above all in her saints and in that religion which with her alone in Tuscany was mystical. Consider then such an action almost religious in itself as the Battle of Montaperto and all that led up to it, the strange self-abnegation, self-accusation and love, the impassioned belief which in fact caused the miracle. Consider the wild prayers for a deliverance as miraculous from Charles V.; consider S. Catherine and S. Bernardino; but chiefly consider that worship of the Blessed Virgin in which the whole city expressed itself, which compelled every gentleman to place his hands

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between hers and to swear allegiance, and which inspired an impassioned loyalty in every man, woman and child. Well, was not the Blessed Virgin the mystic rose in which the desert had blossomed ?

In all these actions and in all these people there is an element of insanity, something strange and unconfined, out of proportion, as it were, with anything but that vast waste country of barren clay and rock which is stretched out before her, across which the eternal mountains shine.

In summer half veiled in heat, invisible at noon and beautiful at evening, you miss its true character and meaning. But watch it on a dark or threatening day, a day of storm or wind when it surges against every gate and is uptossed by every bastion. It is as though that masculine and voracious wilderness, more barren and more terrible than the sea, had hurled itself against the beautiful city and would have consumed her but for the protection of her she still invokes, in whom for so many ages she has sought safety and peace.

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Only a Clown

By "Viator"

When the pock-marked Tartar waiter caught sight of Briggs, who was a special correspondent, and Leary, the Irishman, he jammed his cigarette between his teeth and, dodging swiftly through the close-packed rows of tables, he came across the hall in an instant, facing us with a ribald grin.

"This way, Mr. Briggs. I'll find you a table."

We gave up our furs and snow-shoes to the attendants, threaded our way through the auditorium, and sat down at a table somewhere in the fourth row near a party of officers who were already being served with a second bottle of champagne apiece.

A Russian music-hall is always an interesting place, but I had been there a good deal during the past month, and had it not been for Briggs, who had insisted on dragging me out, I should certainly have gone to bed of the spleen that evening.

The "turns" were all women, all foreigners, and I had seen them dozens of times before. The "Seven English Poppies" went through their high-kicking evolutions to the vast delight of the Russians, the "Three Roumanian Sisters" performed their popular "kissing dance," the "Two Chouettes" from Paris said everything by suggestion that could be said, yet even the "Five Spanish Toreras" failed to excite my enthusiasm, and the sweet champagne at thirty shillings the bottle was execrable.

"Look here, I'm off," I said at about 1.30 A.M.

But my companions would not hear of it. Leary had only been in St. Petersburg a few days, whither he had come, full of fervour and ideas, to study the "revolution" (it was only two months after the day known as "bloody Sunday"); so

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in response to a deft kick from Briggs under the table I made up my mind to see the night through.

I turned round to contemplate the house.

The "Seven English Poppies" had finished their turn by now, and some four of them were seated among the party of officers having supper together with the "Two Chouettes."

Not far from them, directly behind us, sat a girl whose curious beauty immediately attracted my attention. I think it was her eyes, or possibly it was the effect of the unusually long lashes, but they shone and danced and then suddenly all the light seemed to fade and a kind of film dropped across them, like the membrane of some animal's, and then I noticed that she was quite simply dressed and that her lips were constantly moving. I glanced at the man she was sitting with, but there was nothing notable about him. He was a thick-set, typically Moujik cast of fellow with rather a yellow skin and the usual pug nose, but when he spoke the eyes twinkled and smiled like hers and, no doubt, that was why she liked him. For that was evident. She was a gay little person too. Neither he nor she paid much attention to the stage. They sat, laughing, chatting, very close together, and every now and then the girl would place her hand upon his and then they would both laugh with such unaffected pleasure that it was a joy to watch them.

I know not why, but the girl so fascinated me that I could not keep my eyes from her. I wondered what she was. The man was obviously a Moujik, but this little laughing sprite beside him, smoking cigarette after cigarette, with her bubbling lips and eyes of velvet, she was not of the peasant stock, and I sat and watched these two people, so entirely different yet so absorbed in each other, and thought what a strange thing it was, that physical tie which drew man and woman together, and what precisely the tie could be that linked this dainty girl to such a man with his sallow, cracked face. Then a Viennese singer, whose bodice seemed to be made expressly to fall off her back, began to sing a droll song and I turned round to the stage.

Some half a dozen more officers strolled in at that moment and gathered round their comrades at the long table in front

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of us. The Tartar waiter rushed about in search of chairs and champagne, and presently some of the Spanish *torera* girls joined the party, and most of them insisted upon buckling the officers' swords round their waists.

Upstairs, all the boxes which run round the theatre were full and gay supper-parties were taking place in the small rooms attached to them at the back, and every now and then one of the *animer mamzelles*, or beautifully gowned women employed by the management to incite men to drink, would come and peer over the rail into the theatre, casting a critical eye at some potential customer. These women, some of them remarkably handsome, most of them coming from Caucasia, flitted about the whole theatre like harpies of destruction. Their office, I knew, was strictly economic. They were all under the control of a manageress, who looked after them with a care many a mother might envy, and their sole business was to flit from one box to another and urge men to drink and lose money, on a joint commission basis.

Just above me, some two of them were doing a fine trade with a couple of wealthy Siberian Moujiks, as they are called, who were pulling out their hundred-rouble notes from immense pocket-books lying among the dishes as fast as the two harpies, who were cheating them, could get them to stake on this or that throw of the dice-box. And every time that one of the Moujiks lost he would break out into peals of laughter and empty his glass of sweet champagne, and the note would disappear between the white bosom and the corsage of one of the two girls. The moment a glass was emptied the harpies replenished it, and the moment a bottle was empty one of them called out to the waiter to bring another. I rather enjoyed the mechanical cynicism of these two girls, who treated the whole affair in a purely matter-of-course way, for the more amorously inclined the Moujik farmers became, the more cold and calculating grew the two harpies who kept them at bay. I watched their pocket-books sink to quite a normal size. I began even to conjecture precisely at what hour they would be empty.

"I beg pardon, that chair is engaged."

I recognised the voice immediately as that of the girl I had

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been so interested in, and turned round from my contemplation of the harpies inquiringly.

A tall young officer stood in front of her table with one hand on the empty chair beside her. The man she had been speaking to was not to be seen. To all appearance, she was alone.

"Engaged!" laughed the officer. "Who to?"

"To my friend. He's coming back directly," the girl answered quietly, without the slightest trace of fear.

"Your friend! Well, I can't help that. The chair is empty now. He can get another, if he wants one," retorted the youth, who had plainly been drinking.

"But he's been sitting here all the evening. You can't take his chair away like that," pleaded the girl, placing one hand on the chair, as if to pull it away.

The officer looked at her for a moment impudently.

"Can't I? Who says so?" he blurted out.

He wrenched the chair from her grasp and saluted.

"You can tell your little friend I've taken it," he snarled. Then he sauntered back to the table with the chair and sat down next to the thinnest of the "Poppies," who discreetly relieved him of his sword.

Leary had been watching the scene too, and turned to me with heat.

"What a brute!" he said. "By Gad! I wonder what that chap will do when he returns!"

We had not long to wait, for almost the next moment the man strolled through the auditorium and edged up to his vacant place.

He looked round, deliberated with the girl, then slowly and coolly walked up to the officer sitting upon his chair next to the thinnest "Poppy," who was eating cakes.

"There's going to be rough-house," said Leary.

"Shows how little you understand the Russians," retorted Briggs, who was not a special correspondent for nothing.

"What? Yes, I took your chair. You haven't bought it, have you?" the young officer laughed, with his mouth full of caviare, while his comrades glared furiously upon the Moujik intruder.

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"Beg pardon, but you've no right to take my chair." The Moujik spoke quite calmly, almost apologetically. "Give it me back, please."

The young officer grew purple in the face.

"Do you know who you're talking to, you lout? Go away, or it will be the worse for you." The officer's eyes bulged and rolled threateningly.

"I've only asked for my chair," began the Moujik calmly, but before he could get out another word the officer sprang to his feet.

"Get away, you brute," he shouted.

"Certainly," the Moujik answered. "I don't want to make a row. But even an officer can be polite."

"Can he!" flung back the officer, and he dealt the man a heavy clout across the face with his clenched fist.

The Moujik took the blow without saying a word. He looked at the officer for a second, then moved silently away.

As he passed our table I noticed a hot-red streak across his face, but the man seemed singularly impassive, almost incredibly calm in the face of such an insult administered publicly before the whole theatre, but no one ventured upon any comment, and the officer indolently returned to the "Poppy" and his champagne.

"Told you so," said Briggs. "These chaps daren't say anything to the uniform. Makes me sick."

We all turned round to see what the man would do.

I was interested chiefly in the girl, who, to my surprise, showed no trace of anger or annoyance. The man strode up to her table, emptied his glass of vodka, lit a cigarette and then passed his hand across his face.

"Show much?" he inquired coolly.

"Only a little," said the girl. "Never mind. I'll sit on your knee."

She got up as the man sat down and seated herself upon his knee, as if nothing had happened at all.

"It's tremendous," said Leary. "And that's what we in England call the Revolution. By Gum!"

"That's it," put in Briggs. "The psychology of the whole

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thing is in that man. That Moujik there—he's Russia, cold, mysterious, impenetrable. It's not human. It's just negation, ridiculous, hopeless negation."

Briggs felt rather pleased with himself after this little speech, but I felt a confused sympathy for this pair, seemingly so indifferent to all around them—this girl so happy, so fond of a man thus publicly buffeted by a drunken officer, who without a word or a murmur, with the shame of it burning upon his face, accepted the affront like some pariah whelp in an Eastern city.

"Doesn't look a weak chap either," said Leary, who had an eye for such matters. "Takes it like a true Moujik, anyway."

He certainly did. They chatted to each other much as before, though the girl didn't laugh so much; they drank more vodka, smoked more cigarettes, and at about 2.30 they got up and left the hall.

"Well, if that girl sticks to him after that, I'll be shot," said Leary.

"Stick to him! Of course, she will," interposed Briggs. "You don't understand. That fellow couldn't do anything against an officer. Suppose he'd stuck to the chair, he'd have got run through the guts, that's all. He knew that, and so did every one else. You see these Russian Moujiks——"

"Hullo! He's coming back, by Jove! That's the man, isn't it?"

Leary was right. The theatre was fairly empty now—in fact the actual performance was finished and the third part of the night's entertainment, when people sit about and drink, was in full play; but that was the man, without a doubt, picking his way slowly through the emptying hall, towards the table he had left about half an hour ago.

I watched him with an interest of shame and pity. What could he be returning for! Perhaps one of them had left something behind. But no. He strolled up to the table, passed it, passed us so close that he almost brushed against my legs, and made for the big table where the officers sat carousing with drunken hilarity.

As he passed, I looked searchingly up into the man's face.

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It was tight-set but otherwise perfectly calm. A lighted cigarette hung from his lips. He moved easily, walking up to the officers' table with the soft elastic step peculiar to the Russian, which comes to him perhaps from his habit of wearing high boots.

The officers were far too deep in their cups to take any notice of him as he stood there calmly surveying them, glancing carefully at each one in turn, deliberately making up his mind. The young officer who had struck the man had changed his seat and sat at the other end of the table with his back towards him, toying with the sham ringlets of one of the "Chouettes," who was teaching him the chorus of her latest success, "*Vlon, vlon, va le petit cafard chéri.*"

Anticipating trouble, we rose instinctively to our feet.

The man walked leisurely round the table, fixed his eyes intently for a moment upon the officer who had struck him, and touched him lightly on the shoulder.

But the officer was scarcely in a condition to remember him, and after glancing round took no further notice.

"*Pascholsk.* Please," the man said, "I want a word with you."

"*Vlon, vlon, va le petit cafard chéri!*" The officer bawled out the stave of the "Chouette's" chorus, as she sat upon his lap with one of her knees pressed against the table. "Here, have a drink!" he cried out.

To my surprise, the Moujik drew back and gave the officer a resounding thump on the back.

"*Pascholsk!*" he repeated.

The effect of the blow was instantaneous. The "Poppies" and the "Toreras" ceased giggling and screaming and all the other officers turned round on their chairs, aghast at the Moujik's effrontery.

"Put that woman down," said the Moujik, "and stand up," and the fat "Chouette" relapsed sullenly into the next chair.

The young officer stared with drunken amazement. He was evidently trying to think. He put his hand on the "Chouette's" plump shoulder and tried to assist himself to rise.

So for a second or two the man and the officer glared at each other, then suddenly, without a word, almost before we could

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realise what had happened, the Moujik seized the officer by both ears.

An agonised shriek wailed through the theatre. I heard a tearing sound. I saw a streaming flow of blood. Next moment the officer fell back writhing upon the floor, and I saw his two bleeding ears quivering like little pieces of blancmange, one in each of the Moujik's hands.

It took place so quickly that nobody moved or spoke. The Moujik looked at the two ears with a mock expression of satisfaction and dropped one carefully among the champagne bottles.

"I've promised the other," he remarked casually.

Then before the other officers, stupid and heavy with drink, had risen excitedly to their feet, some to raise up the officer lying in a faint under the table, some vainly seeking to unbuckle their swords from the girls' waists, the man wheeled round and disappeared, unmolested by the people, out of the hall.

Outside, just as he was getting into a sleigh, where the girl I had admired was seated awaiting him, Leary and I caught him by the arm.

"Splendid!" exclaimed the Irishman, clapping him on the back.

"You must be as strong as a bull. What the deuce are you?"

The man wiped the ear drolly against his coat-sleeve and placed it upon the girl's lap. Her eyes glimmered like stars.

"Drive off," he shouted, and as the sleigh leapt silently across the snow, he turned round upon us and threw back with an admirable nonchalance, "Me! I'm only a clown."

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The New Machiavelli

By H. G. Wells

CHAPTER THE FOURTH

THE HOUSE IN WESTMINSTER

§ 1. MARGARET had already taken a little house in Radnor Square, Westminster, before our marriage, a house that seemed particularly adaptable to our needs as public-spirited efficients; it had been very pleasantly painted and papered under Margaret's instructions, white paint and clean open purples and green predominating, and now we set to work at once upon the interesting business of arranging and—with our Venetian glass as a beginning—furnishing it. We had been fairly fortunate with our wedding presents and for the most part it was open to us to choose just exactly what we would have, and just precisely where we would put it.

Margaret had a sense of form and colour altogether superior to mine, and so quite apart from the fact that it was her money equipped us, I stood aside from all these matters or obeyed her summons to a consultation only to endorse her judgment very readily. Until everything was settled I went every day to my old rooms in Vincent Square and worked at a series of papers that were originally intended for the *Fortnightly Review*, the papers that afterwards became my fourth book, *New Aspects of Liberalism*.

I still remember as delightful most of the circumstances of getting into 79 Radnor Square. The thin flavour of indecision about Margaret disappeared altogether in a shop; she had the precisest ideas of what she wanted, and the devices of the salesman did not sway her. It was very pleasant to find her taking things out of my hands with a certain masterfulness, and showing the distinctest determination to make a house in which I should be able to work in that great project of "doing something for the world."

"And I do want to make things pretty about us," she said. "You don't think it wrong to have things pretty?"

"I want them so."

"Altiora has things hard."

"Altiora," I answered, "takes a pride in standing ugly and uncomfortable things. But I don't see that they help her. Anyhow they won't help me."

So Margaret went to the best shops and got everything very simple and very good. She bought some pictures very well indeed; there was a little

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Sussex landscape full of wind and sunshine by Nicholson for my study, that hit my taste far better than if I had gone out to get some such expression for myself.

"We will buy a picture just now and then," she said, "sometimes—when we see one."

I would come back through the January mire or fog from Vincent Square to the door of No. 79, and reach it at last with a quite childish appreciation of the fact that its solid Georgian proportions and its fine brass furnishings belonged to *my* home; I would use my latch-key and discover Margaret in the warm-lit, spacious hall with a partially opened packing-case, fatigued but happy, or go up to have tea with her out of the right tea-things, "come at last," or be told to notice what was fresh there. It wasn't simply that I have never had a house before, but I had really never been except in the most transitory way in any house that was nearly so delightful as mine promised to be. Everything was fresh and bright, and softly and harmoniously toned. Downstairs we had a green dining-room with gleaming silver, dark oak and English colour-prints; above was a large drawing-room that could be made still larger by throwing open folding-doors, and it was all carefully done in greys and blues, for the most part with real Sheraton supplemented by Sheraton so skilfully imitated by an expert Margaret had discovered as to be indistinguishable except to a minute scrutiny. And for me above this and next to my bedroom there was a roomy study, with specially thick stair carpet outside and thick carpets in the bedroom overhead and a big old desk for me to sit and work at between fire and window, and another desk specially made for me by that expert if I chose to stand and write, and open bookshelves and bookcases and every sort of convenient fitting. There were electric heaters beside the open fire, and everything was put for me to make tea at any time, electric kettle, infuser, biscuits and fresh butter, so that I could get up and work at any hour of the day or night. I could do no work in this apartment for a long time, I was so interested in the perfection of its arrangements. And when I brought in my books and papers from Vincent Square, Margaret seized upon all the really shabby volumes and had them rebound in a fine official-looking leather.

I can remember sitting down at that desk and looking round me and feeling with a queer effect of surprise that after all even a place in the Cabinet, though infinitely remote, was nevertheless in the same large world with these fine and quietly expensive things.

On the same floor Margaret had a "den," a very neat and pretty den with good colour-prints of Botticellis and Carpaccios, and there was a third apartment for secretarial purposes should the necessity for them arise, with a severe-looking desk equipped with patent files. And Margaret would come flitting into the room to me, or appear noiselessly standing, a tall gracefully drooping form, in the wide open doorway. "Is everything right, dear?" she would ask.

"Come in," I would say, "I'm sorting out papers."

She would come to the hearthrug.

"I mustn't disturb you," she would remark.

"I'm not busy yet."

"Things are getting into order. Then we must make out a time-table as the Baileys do, and *begin!*"

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Altiora came in to see us once or twice, and a number of serious young wives known to Altiora called and were shown over the house and discussed its arrangements with Margaret. They were all tremendously keen on efficient arrangements. "A little pretty," said Altoira with the faintest disapproval, "still——"

It was clear she thought we should grow out of that.

From the day of our return we had found other people's houses open to us and eager for us. We went out of London for week-ends and dined out and began discussing our projects for reciprocating these hospitalities. As a single man unattached I had had a wide and miscellaneous social range, but now I found myself falling into place in a set. For a time I acquiesced in this. I went very little to my clubs, the Climax and the National Liberal, and participated in no bachelor dinners at all. For a time, too, I dropped out of the garrulous literary and journalistic circles I had frequented. I put up for the Reform, not so much for the use of the club as a sign of serious and substantial political standing. I didn't go up to Cambridge I remember for nearly a year, so occupied was I with my new adjustments.

The people we found ourselves among at this time were people, to put it roughly, of the parliamentary candidate class, or people already actually placed in the political world. They ranged between very considerable wealth and such a hard bare independence as old Willersley and the sister who kept house for him possessed. There were quite a number of young couples like ourselves, a little younger and more artless or a little older and more established. Among the younger men I had a sort of distinction because of my Cambridge reputation and my writing, and because, unlike them, I was an adventurer and had won and married my way into their circles instead of being naturally there. They couldn't quite reckon upon what I should do; they felt I had reserves of experience and incalculable traditions. Close to us were the Cramptons, Willie Crampton who has since been Postmaster-General—rich and very important in Rockshire—and his younger brother Edward, who has given a new style to history. Then there were Lewis—farther towards Kensington, where his cousins the Solomons and the Hartsteins lived, a brilliant representative of his race, able, industrious, and invariably uninspired, with a wife a little in revolt against the racial tradition of feminine servitude and inclined to the Suffragette point of view—and Bunting Harblow, an old blue, and with an erratic disposition well under the control of the able little cousin he had married. I had known all these men, but now (with Altiora floating angelically in benediction) they opened their hearts to me and took me into their order. They were all like myself prospective Liberal candidates, with a feeling that the period of wandering in the wilderness of opposition was drawing near its close. They were all tremendously keen upon social and political service, and all greatly under the sway of the ideal of a simple strenuous life, a life finding its satisfactions in political achievements and distinctions. The young wives were as keen about it as the young husbands, Margaret most of all, and I—whatever elements in me didn't march with the attitudes and habits of this set were very much in the background during that time.

We would give little dinners and have evening gatherings at which everything was very simple and very good, with a slight but perceptible

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austerity, and there was more good fruit and flowers and less perhaps in the way of savouries, patties, and *entrées* than was customary. Sherry we banished, and Marsala and liqueurs, and there was always good home-made lemonade available. No men waited, but very expert parlourmaids. Our meat was usually Welsh mutton—I don't know why unless that mountains have ever been the last refuge of the severer virtues. And we talked politics and books and ideas and Bernard Shaw (who was a department by himself and supposed in those days to be ethically sound at bottom), and mingled ourselves with the intellectuals—I myself, as it were, a promoted intellectual.

The Cramptons had a tendency to read good things aloud on their less-frequented receptions, but I have never been able to participate submissively in this hyperdigestion of written matter and generally managed to provoke a disruptive debate. We were all very earnest to make the most of ourselves and to be and do, and I wonder still at times with an unassuaged perplexity how it is that in that phase of utmost earnestness I have always seemed to myself to be most remote from reality.

§ 2. I look back now across the detaching intervention of sixteen crowded years critically, and I fancy almost impartially, to those beginnings of my married life. I try to recall in something near to their proper order the developing phases of relationship. I am struck most of all by the immense unpremeditated, generous-spirited insincerities upon which Margaret and I were building.

It seems to me that here I have to tell perhaps the commonest experience of all among married educated people, the deliberate, shy, complex effort to fill the yawning gaps in temperament as they appear, the sustained, failing attempt to bridge abysses, level barriers, evade violent pressures. I have come in these latter years of my life to believe that it is possible for a man and woman to be absolutely real with one another, to stand naked souled to each other, unashamed and unafraid, because of the natural all-glorifying love between them. It is possible to love and be loved untroubling, as a bird flies through the air. But it is a rare and intricate chance that brings two people within sight of that essential union, and for the majority marriage must adjust itself on other terms. Most coupled people never really look at one another. They look a little away to preconceived ideas. And each from the first days of love-making *hides* from the other, is afraid of disappointing, afraid of offending, afraid of discoveries in either sense. They build not solidly upon the rock of truth, but upon arches and pillars and queer provisional supports that are needed to make a common foundation, and below in the imprisoned darknesses, below the fine fabric they sustain together begins for each of them a cavernous hidden life. Down there things may be prowling that scarce ever peep out to consciousness except in the grey half-light of sleepless nights, passions that flash out for an instant in an angry glance and are seen no more, starved victims and beautiful dreams bricked up to die. For the most of us there is no gaol delivery of those inner depths, and the life above goes on to its honourable end.

I have told how I loved Margaret and how I came to marry her. Perhaps already unintentionally I have indicated the quality of the injustice our marriage did us both. There was no kindred between us and no under-

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standing. We were drawn to one another by the unlikeness of our quality, by the things we misunderstood in each other. I know a score of couples who have married in that fashion.

Modern conditions and modern ideas, and in particular the intenser and subtler perceptions of modern life, press more and more heavily upon a marriage tie whose fashion comes from an earlier and less discriminating time. When the wife was her husband's subordinate, meeting him simply and uncritically for simple ends, when marriage was a purely domestic relationship, leaving thought and the vivid things of life almost entirely to the unencumbered man, mental and temperamental incompatibilities mattered comparatively little. But now the wife and particularly the loving childless wife unpremeditatedly makes a relentless demand for a complete association, and the husband exacts unthought-of delicacies of understanding and co-operation. These are stupendous demands: People not only think more fully and elaborately about life than they ever did before, but marriage obliges us to make that ever more accidented progress a three-legged race of carelessly assorted couples. . . .

Our very mental texture was different. I was tough-minded, to use the phrase of William James, primary and intuitive and illogical, she was tender-minded, logical, refined, and secondary. She was loyal to pledges and persons, sentimental and faithful, I am loyal to ideas and instincts, emotional and scheming. My imagination moves in broad wide gestures, hers was delicate with a real dread of extravagance. My quality is sensuous and ruled by warm impulses; hers was discriminating and essentially inhibitory. I like the facts of the case and to mention everything; I like naked bodies and the jolly smells of things. She abounded in reservations, in circumlocutions and evasions, in keenly appreciated secondary points. Perhaps the reader knows that Tintoretto in the National Gallery —the *Origin of the Milky Way*. It is an admirable test of temperamental quality. In spite of my early training I have come to regard that picture as altogether delightful; to Margaret it has always been "needlessly offensive." In that you have our fundamental breach. She had a habit by no means rare of damning what she did not like or find sympathetic in me on the score that it was not my "true self," and she did not so much accept the universe as select from it and do her best to ignore the rest. And also I had far more initiative than had she. This is no catalogue of rights and wrongs, or superiorities and inferiorities; it is a catalogue of differences between two people linked in a relationship that constantly becomes more intolerant of differences.

This is how we stood to each other, and none of it was clear to either of us at the outset. To begin with I found myself reserving myself from her, then slowly apprehending a jarring between our minds and what seemed to me at first a queer little habit of misunderstanding in her. . . .

It did not hinder my being very fond of her. . . .

Where our system of reservation became at once most usual and most astounding was in our personal relations. It is not too much to say that in that regard we never for a moment achieved sincerity with one another during the first six years of our life together. It goes even deeper than that, for in my effort to realise the ideal of my marriage I ceased even to attempt to be sincere with myself. I would not admit my own perceptions and interpretations. I tried to fit myself to her thinner and finer deter-

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minations. There are people who will say with a note of approval that I was learning to conquer myself. I record that much without any note of approval. . . .

For some years I never deceived Margaret about any concrete fact nor, except for the silence about my earlier life that she had almost forced upon me, did I hide any concrete fact that seemed to affect her, but from the outset I was guilty of immense spiritual concealments, my very marriage was based, I see now, on a spiritual subterfuge, I hid moods from her, pretended feelings. . . .

§ 3. The interest and excitement of setting up a house, of walking about it from room to room and from floor to floor, of sitting at one's own dinner table and watching one's wife control conversation with a pretty, timid resolution, of taking a place among the secure and free people of our world, passed almost insensibly into the interest and excitement of my parliamentary candidature for the Kinghamstead division, that shapeless chunk of agricultural midland between the Great Western and the North-Western railways. I was going to " take hold " at last, the Kinghamstead division was my appointed handle. I was to find my place in the rather indistinctly sketched constructions that were implicit in the minds of all our circle. The precise place I had to fill and the precise functions I had to discharge were not as yet very clear, but all that we felt sure would become plain as things developed.

A few brief months of the vague activities of " nursing " gave place to the excitements of the contest that followed the return of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman to power in 1905. So far as the Kinghamstead division was concerned it was a depressed and tepid battle. I went about the constituency making three speeches that were soon threadbare, and an odd little collection of people worked for me ; two solicitors, a cheap photographer, a democratic parson, a number of dissenting ministers, the mayor of Kinghamstead, a Mrs. Bulger, the widow of an old Chartist who had grown rich through electric traction patents, Sir Roderick Newton, a Jew who had bought Calersham Castle, and old Sir Graham Rivers, that sturdy old soldier, were among my chief supporters. We had headquarters in each town and village, mostly they were empty shops we leased temporarily, and there at least a sort of fuss and a coming and going were maintained. The rest of the population stared in a state of suspended judgment as we went about the business. The country was supposed to be in a state of intellectual conflict and deliberate decision, in history it will no doubt figure as a momentous conflict. Yet except for an occasional flare of bill-sticking or a bill in a window or a placard-plastered motor-car, or an argumentative group of people outside a public-house or a sluggish movement towards the schoolroom or village hall, there was scarcely a sign that a great empire was revising its destinies. Now and then one saw a canvasser on a door-step. For the most part people went about their business with an entirely irresponsible confidence in the stability of the universe. At times one felt a little absurd with one's flutter of colours and one's air of saving the country.

My opponent was a quite undistinguished Major-General who relied upon his advocacy of Protection, and was particularly anxious we should avoid " personalities " and fight the constituency in a gentlemanlike spirit.

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He was always writing me notes, apologising for excesses on the part of his supporters, or pointing out the undesirability of some course taken by mine.

My speeches had been planned upon broad lines, but they lost touch with these as the polling approached. To begin with I made a real attempt to put what was in my mind before the people I was to supply with a political voice. I spoke of the greatness of our empire and its destinies, of the splendid projects and possibilities of life and order that lay before the world, of all that a resolute and constructive effort might do at the present time. "We are building a state," I said, "secure and splendid, we are in the dawn of the great age of mankind." Sometimes that would get a solitary "'Ear, 'ear!" Then having created, as I imagined, a fine atmosphere, I turned upon the history of the last Conservative administration and brought it into contrast with the wide occasions of the age; discussed its failure to control the grasping financiers in South Africa, its failure to release public education from sectarian squabbles, its misconduct of the Boer War, its waste of the world's resources. . . .

It soon became manifest that my opening and my general spaciousness of method bored my audiences a good deal. The richer and wider my phrases the thinner sounded my voice in these non-resonating gatherings. Even the platform supporters grew restive unconsciously, and stirred and coughed. They did not recognise themselves as mankind. Building an empire, preparing a fresh stage in the history of humanity, had no appeal for them. They were mostly everyday toiling people full of small personal solitudes, and they came to my meetings I think very largely as a relaxation. This stuff was not relaxing. They did not think politics was a great constructive process, they thought it was a kind of dog-fight. They wanted fun, they wanted spice, they wanted hits, they wanted also a chance to say "'Ear, 'ear!" in an intelligent and honourable manner and clap their hands and drum with their feet. The great constructive process in history gives so little scope for clapping and drumming and saying "'Ear, 'ear!" One might as well think of hounding on the solar system.

So after one or two attempts to lift my audiences to the level of the issues involved, I began to adapt myself to them. I cut down my review of our imperial outlook and destinies more and more, and developed a series of hits and anecdotes and—what shall I call them?—"crudifications" of the issue. My helpers congratulated me on the rapid improvement of my platform style. I ceased to speak of the late Prime Minister with the respect I bore him, and began to fall in with the popular caricature of him as an artful rabbit-witted person intent only on keeping his leadership, in spite of the vigorous attempts of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain to oust him therefrom. I ceased to qualify my statement that Protection would make food dearer for the agricultural labourer. I began to speak of Mr. Alfred Lyttelton as an influence at once insane and diabolical, as a man inspired by a passionate desire to substitute manacled but still criminal Chinese for honest British labourers throughout the world. And when it came to the mention of our own kindly leader, of Mr. John Burns or any one else of any prominence at all on our side I fell more and more into the intonation of one who mentions the high gods. And I had my reward in brighter meetings and readier and readier applause.

One goes on from phase to phase in these things.

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"After all," I told myself, "if one wants to get to Westminster one must follow the road that leads there," but I found the road nevertheless rather unexpectedly distasteful. "When one gets there," I said, "then it is one begins."

But I would lie awake at nights with that sore throat and headache and fatigue which come from speaking in ill-ventilated rooms and wondering how far it was possible to educate a whole people to great political ideals. Why should political work always rot down to personalities and personal appeals in this way? Life is, I suppose, to begin with and end with a matter of personalities, from personalities all our broader interests arise and to personalities they return. All our social and political effort, all of it, is like trying to make a crowd of people fall into formation. The broader lines appear, but then come a rush and excitement and irrelevancy, and forthwith the incipient order has vanished and the marshals must begin the work over again!

My memory of all that time is essentially confusion. There was a frightful lot of tiresome locomotion in it; for the Kinghamstead division is extensive, abounding in ill-graded and badly metalled cross-roads and vicious little hills, and singularly unpleasing to the eye in a muddy winter. It is sufficiently near to London to have undergone the same process of ill-regulated expansion that made Bromstead the place it is. Several of its overgrown villages have developed strings of factories and sidings along the railway lines, and there is an abundance of petty villas. There seemed to be no place at which one could take hold of more than this or that element of the population. Now we met in a meeting-house, now in a masonic hall or drill hall; I also did a certain amount of open-air speaking in the dinner hour outside gasworks and groups of factories. Some special sort of people was, as it were, secreted in response to each special appeal. One said things carefully adjusted to the distinctive limitations of each gathering. Jokes of an incredible silliness and shallowness drifted about us. Our advisers made us declare that if we were elected we would live in the district, and one hasty agent had bills printed, "If Mr. Remington is elected he will live here." The enemy obtained a number of these bills and stuck them on out-houses, pig-sties, dog-kennels; you cannot imagine how irksome the repetition of that jest became. The vast drifting indifference in between my meetings impressed me more and more. I realised the vagueness of my own plans as I had never done before I brought them to the test of this experience. I was perplexed by the riddle of just how far I was in any sense of the word taking hold at all, how far I wasn't myself flowing into an accepted groove.

Margaret was troubled by no such doubts. She was clear I had to go into parliament on the side of Liberalism and the light, as against the late Government and darkness. Essential to the memory of my first contest is the memory of her clear bright face, very resolute and grave, helping me consciously, steadfastly, with all her strength. Her quiet confidence, while I was so dissatisfied, worked curiously towards the alienation of my sympathies. I felt she had no business to be so sure of me. I had moments of vivid resentment at being thus marched towards parliament.

I seemed now always to be discovering alien forces of character in her. Her way of taking life diverged from me more and more. She sounded amazing independent notes. She bought some particularly costly furs for

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the campaign that roused enthusiasm whenever she appeared. She also made me a birthday present in November of a heavily fur-trimmed coat, and this she would make me remove as I went on to the platform, and hold over her arm until I was ready to resume it. It was heavy for her and she liked it to be heavy for her. That act of servitude was in essence a towering self-assertion. I would glance sideways while some chairman floundered through his introduction and see the clear blue eye with which she regarded the audience, which existed so far as she was concerned merely to return me to parliament. It was a friendly eye, provided they were not silly or troublesome. But it kindled a little at the hint of a hostile question. After we had come so far and taken so much trouble!

She constituted herself the dragoman of our political travels. In hotels she was serenely resolute for the quietest and the best, she rejected all their proposals for meals and substituted a severely nourishing dietary of her own, and even in private houses she astonished me by her tranquil insistence upon special comforts and sustenance. I can see her face now as it would confront a hostess, a little intent, but sweetly resolute and assured.

Since our marriage she had read a number of political memoirs, and she had been particularly impressed by the career of Mrs. Gladstone. I don't think it occurred to her to compare and contrast my quality with that of Mrs. Gladstone's husband. I suspect her of a deliberate intention of achieving parallel results by parallel methods. I was to be Gladstonised. Gladstone it appeared used to lubricate his speeches with a mixture—if my memory serves me right—of egg beaten up in sherry, and Margaret was very anxious I should take a leaf from that celebrated book. She wanted, I know, to hold the glass in her hand while I was speaking.

But here I was firm. "No," I said, very decisively, "simply I won't stand that. It's a matter of conscience. I shouldn't feel—democratic. I'll take my chance of the common water in the carafe on the chairman's table."

"I *do* wish you wouldn't," she said, distressed. . . .

It was absurd to feel irritated; it was so admirable of her, a little childish, infinitely womanly and devoted and fine—and I see now how pathetic. But I could not afford to succumb to her. I wanted to follow my own leading, to see things clearly, and this reassuring pose of a high destiny, of an almost terribly efficient pursuit of a fixed end when, as a matter of fact, I had a very doubtful end and an aim as yet by no means fixed, was all too seductive for dalliance. . . .

§ 4. And into all these things with the manner of a trifling and casual incident comes the figure of Isabel Rivers. My first impressions of her were of a rather ugly and ungainly, extraordinarily interesting schoolgirl with a beautiful quick flush under her warm brown skin, who said and did amusing and surprising things. When first I saw her she was riding a very old bicycle downhill with her feet on the fork of the frame—it seemed to me to the public danger but afterwards I came to understand the quality of her nerve better—and on the third occasion she was for her own private satisfaction climbing a tree. On the intervening occasion we had what seems now to have been a long-sustained conversation about the political situation and the books and papers I had written.

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I wonder if it was.

What a delightful mixture of child and grave woman she was at that time, and how little I reckoned on the part she would play in my life! And since she has played that part how impossible it is to tell now of those early days! Since I wrote that opening paragraph to this section my idle pen has been, as it were, playing by itself and sketching faces on the blotting-pad—one impish wizened visage is oddly like little Bailey—and I have been thinking, cheek on fist, amidst a limitless wealth of memories. She sits below me on the low wall under the olive-trees with our little child in her arms: she is now the central fact in my life. She has destroyed me as a politician, brought me to this belated rebeginning of life. When I sit down and try to make her a girl again, I feel like the Arabian fisherman who tried to put the genius back into the pot from which it had spread gigantic across the skies. . . .

I have a very clear vision of her rush downhill past our labouring ascendant car—my colours fluttered from handle-bar and shoulder-knot—and her waving hand and the sharp note of her voice. She cried out something, I don't know what, some greeting.

"What a pretty girl!" said Margaret.

Parvill the cheap photographer, that industrious organiser for whom by way of repayment I got those magic letters, that knighthood of the underlings, "J.P.," was in the car with us and explained her to us. "One of the best workers you have," he said. . . .

And then after a toilsome troubled morning we came, rather cross from the strain of sustained amiability, into Sir Graham Rivers' house. It seemed all softness and quiet—I recall dead white panelling and oval mirrors horizontally set and a marble fireplace between white marble-blind Homer and marble-blind Virgil, very grave and fine—and how Isabel came in to lunch in a shapeless thing like a blue smock that made her bright quick-changing face seem yellow under her cloud of black hair. Her stepsister was there, Miss Gamer, to whom the house was to descend, a well-dressed lady of thirty, amiably disavowing responsibility for Isabel in every phrase and gesture. And there was a very pleasant doctor, an Oxford man, who seemed on excellent terms with every one. It was manifest that he was in the habit of sparring with the girl, but on this occasion she wasn't sparring and refused to be teased into a display in spite of the taunts of either him or her father. She was, they discovered with rising eyebrows, shy. It seemed an opportunity too rare for them to miss. They proclaimed her enthusiasm for me in a way that brought a flush to her cheek and a look into her eye between appeal and defiance. They declared she had read my books, which I thought at the time was exaggeration, their dry political quality was so distinctly not what one was accustomed to regard as schoolgirl reading. Miss Gamer protested to protect her, "When once in a blue moon Isabel is well-behaved. . . !"

Except for these attacks I do not remember much of the conversation at table; it was, I know, discursive and concerned with the sort of topographical and social and electioneering fact natural to such a visit. Old Rivers struck me as a delightful person, modestly unconscious of his doubly earned V.C. and the plucky defence of Kardin-Bergat that won his baronetcy. He was that excellent type, the soldier radical, and we began that day a friendship that was only ended by his death in the hunting-field

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three years later. He interested Margaret into a disregard of my plate and the fact that I had secured the illegal indulgence of Moselle. After lunch we went for coffee into another low room, this time brown panelled and looking through French windows on a red-walled garden, graceful even in its winter desolation. And there the conversation suddenly picked up and became good. It had fallen to a pause, and the doctor with an air of definitely throwing off a mask and wrecking an established tranquillity, remarked: "Very probably you Liberals will come in, though I'm not sure you'll come in so mightily as you think, but what you'll do when you do come in passes my comprehension."

"There's good work sometimes," said Sir Graham, "in undoing."

"You can't govern a great empire by amending and repealing the Acts of your predecessors," said the doctor.

There came that kind of pause that happens when a subject is broached too big and difficult for the gathering. Margaret's blue eyes regarded the speaker with quiet disapproval for a moment and then came to me in the not too confident hope that I would snub him out of existence with some prompt rhetorical stroke. A voice spoke out of the big arm-chair.

"We'll do things," said Isabel.

The doctor's eye lit with the joy of the fisherman who strikes his fish at last. "What will you do?" he asked her.

"Every one knows we're a mixed lot," said Isabel.

"Poor old chaps like me!" interjected the general.

"But that's not a programme," said the doctor.

"But Mr. Remington has published a programme," said Isabel.

The doctor cocked half an eye at me.

"In some review," the girl went on. "After all, we're not going to elect the whole Liberal party in the Kinghamstead division. I'm a Remingtonite!"

"But the programme," said the doctor, "the programme——"

"In front of Mr. Remington!"

"Scandal always comes home at last," said the doctor; "let him hear the worst."

"I'd like to hear," I said. "Electioneering shatters convictions and enfeebles the mind."

"Not mine," said Isabel stoutly. "I mean— Well, anyhow I take it Mr. Remington stands for constructing a civilised state out of this muddle."

"*This* muddle," protested the doctor with an appeal of the eye to the beautiful long room and the ordered garden outside the bright clean windows.

"Well, *that* muddle if you like! There's a slum within a mile of us already. The dust and blacks get worse and worse, Sissie?"

"They do," agreed Miss Gamer.

"Mr. Remington stands for construction, order, education, discipline."

"And you?" said the doctor.

"I'm a good Remingtonite."

"Discipline!" said the doctor.

"Oh!" said Isabel. "At times one has to be—Napoleonic. They want to libel me Mr. Remington. A political worker can't always be in time for meals, can she? At times one has to make—splendid cuts."

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Miss Gamer said something indistinctly.

"Order, education, discipline," said Sir Graham. "Excellent things! But I've a sort of memory—in my young days—we talked about something called liberty."

"Liberty under the law," I said, with an unexpected approving murmur from Margaret, and took up the defence. "The old Liberal definition of liberty was a trifle uncritical. Privilege and legal restrictions are not the only enemies of liberty. An uneducated, underbred and underfed propertyless man is a man who has lost the possibility of liberty. There's no liberty worth a rap for him. A man who is swimming hopelessly for life wants nothing but the liberty to get out of the water; he'll give every other liberty for it—until he gets out."

Sir Graham took me up and we fell into a discussion of the changing qualities of Liberalism. It was a good give-and-take talk, extraordinarily refreshing after the nonsense and crowding secondary issues of the electioneering outside. We all contributed more or less except Miss Gamer; Margaret followed with knitted brows and occasional interjections. "People won't *see* that," for example, and "It all seems so plain to me." The doctor showed himself clever, but unsubstantial and inconsistent. Isabel sat back with her black mop of hair buried deep in the chair looking quickly from face to face. Her colour came and went with her vivid intellectual excitement; occasionally she would dart a word, usually a very apt word, like a lizard's tongue into the discussion. I remember chiefly that a chance illustration betrayed that she had read Bishop Burnet. . . .

After that it was not surprising that Isabel should ask for a lift in our car as far as the Lurky Committee Room and that she should offer me quite sound advice *en route* upon the intellectual temperament of the Lurky gas-workers. . . .

On the third occasion that I saw Isabel she was, as I have said, climbing a tree—and a very creditable tree—for her own private satisfaction. It was a lapse from the high seriousness of politics, and I perceived she felt that I might regard it as such and attach too much importance to it. I had some difficulty in reassuring her. And it's odd to note now—it has never occurred to me before—that from that day to this I do not think I have ever reminded Isabel of that encounter.

And after that memory she seems to be flickering about always in the election, an inextinguishable flame; now she flew by on her bicycle, now she dashed into committee rooms, now she appeared on doorsteps in animated conversation with dubious voters; I took every chance I could to talk to her—I had never met anything like her before in the world and she interested me immensely—and before the polling day she and I had become, in the frankest simplicity, fast friends.

§ 5. Polling day came after a last hoarse and dingy crescendo. The excitement was not of the sort that makes one forget one is tired out. The waiting for the end of the count has left a long blank mark on my memory, and then every one was shaking my hand and repeating: "Nine hundred and seventy-six."

My success had been a foregone conclusion since the afternoon, but we all behaved as though we had not been anticipating this result for hours, as though any other figures but nine hundred and seventy-six would have

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meant something entirely different. "Nine hundred and seventy-six!" said Margaret. "They didn't expect three hundred."

"Nine hundred and seventy-six," said a little short man with a paper. "It means a big turnover. Two dozen short of a thousand, you know."

A tremendous hullabaloo began outside, and a lot of fresh people came into the room.

Isabel, flushed but not out of breath, Heaven knows where she had sprung from at that time of night! was running her hand down my sleeve almost caressingly, with the innocent bold affection of a girl. "Got you in!" she said. "It's been no end of a lark."

"And now," said I, "I must go and be constructive."

"Now you must go and be constructive," she said.

"You've got to live here," she added.

"By Jove, yes," I said. "We'll have to house-hunt."

"I shall read all your speeches."

She hesitated.

"I wish I was you," she said, and said it as though it was not exactly the thing she was meaning to say.

"They want you to speak," said Margaret, with something unsaid in her face.

"You must come out with me," I answered, putting my arm through hers, and felt some one urging me to the French windows that gave on the balcony.

"If you think——" she said, yielding gladly.

"Oh *rather!*" said I.

The Mayor of Kinghamstead, a managing little man with no great belief in my oratorical powers, was sticking his face up to mine.

"It's all over," he said, "and you've won. Say all the nice things you can and say them plainly."

I turned and handed Margaret out through the window and stood looking over the market-place, which was more than half filled with swaying people. The crowd set up a roar of approval at the sight of us, tempered by a little booing. Down in one corner of the square a fight was going on for a flag, a fight that even the prospect of a speech could not instantly check. "Speech!" cried voices, "speech!" and then a brief "boo-oo-oo" that was drowned in a cascade of shouts and cheers. The conflict round the flag culminated in the smashing of a pane of glass in the chemist's window and instantly sank to peace.

"Gentlemen voters of the Kinghamstead Division," I began.

"Votes for Women!" yelled a voice, amidst laughter—the first time I remember hearing that memorable war-cry.

"Three cheers for Mrs. Remington!"

"Mrs. Remington asks me to thank you," I said, amidst further uproar and reiterated cries of "Speech!"

Then silence came with a startling swiftness.

Isabel was still in my mind, I suppose. "I shall go to Westminster," I began. I sought for some compelling phrase and could not find one. "To do my share," I went on, "in building up a great and splendid civilisation."

I paused, and there was a weak gust of cheering, and then a renewal of booing.

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"This election," I said, "has been the end and the beginning of much. New ideas are abroad——"

"Chinese labour," yelled a voice, and across the square swept a wildfire of hooting and bawling.

It is one of the few occasions when I quite lost my hold on a speech. I glanced sideways and saw the Mayor of Kinghamstead speaking behind his hand to Parvill. By a happy chance Parvill caught my eye.

"What do they want?" I asked.

"Eh?"

"What do they want?"

"Say something about general fairness—the other side," prompted Parvill, flattered but a little surprised by my appeal. I pulled myself hastily into a more popular strain with a gross eulogy of my opponent's good taste.

"Chinese labour!" cried the voice again.

"You've given that notice to quit," I answered.

The market-place roared delight, but whether that delight expressed hostility to Chinamen or hostility to their practical enslavement no student of the General Election of 1906 has ever been able to determine. Certainly one of the most effective posters on our side displayed a hideous yellow face, just that and nothing more. There was not even a legend to it. How it impressed the electorate we did not know, but that it impressed the electorate profoundly there can be no disputing.

§ 6. Kinghamstead was one of the earliest constituencies fought, and we came back—it must have been Saturday—triumphant but very tired, to our house in Radnor Square. In the train we read the first intimations that the victory of our party was likely to be a sweeping one.

Then came a period when one was going about receiving and giving congratulations and watching the other men arrive, very like a boy who has returned to school with the first batch after the holidays. The London world reeked with the General Election; it had invaded the nurseries. All the children of one's friends had got big maps of England cut up into squares to represent constituencies and were busy sticking gummed red labels over the conquered blue of Unionism that had hitherto submerged the country. And there were also orange labels, if I remember rightly, to represent the new Labour party, and green for the Irish. I engaged myself to speak at one or two London meetings, and lunched at the Reform, which was fairly tepid, and dined and spent one or two tumultuous evenings at the National Liberal Club, which was in active eruption. The National Liberal became feverishly congested towards midnight as the results of the counting came dropping in. A big green-baize screen had been fixed up at one end of the large smoking-room with the names of the constituencies that were voting that day, and directly the figures came to hand, up they went, amidst cheers that at last lost their energy through sheer repetition whenever there was record of a Liberal gain. I don't remember what happened when there was a Liberal loss; I don't think that any were announced while I was there.

How packed and noisy the place was, and what a reek of tobacco and whisky fumes we made! Everybody was excited and talking, making waves of harsh confused sound that beat upon one's ears, and every now

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and then hoarse voices would shout for some one to speak. Our little set was much in evidence. Both the Cramptons were in, Lewis, Bunting Harblow. We gave brief addresses attuned to this excitement and the late hour, amidst much enthusiasm.

"Now we can *do* things!" I said amidst a rapture of applause. Men I did not know from Adam held up glasses and nodded to me in solemn fuddled approval as I came down past them into the crowd again.

Men were betting whether the Unionists would lose more or less than two hundred seats.

"I wonder just what we shall do with it all," I heard one sceptic speculating. . . .

After these orgies I would get home very tired and excited, and find it difficult to get to sleep. I would lie and speculate about what it was we *were* going to do. One hadn't anticipated quite such a tremendous accession to power for one's party. Liberalism was swirling in like a flood. . . .

I found the next few weeks very unsatisfactory and distressing. I don't clearly remember what it was I had expected; I suppose the fuss and strain of the general election had built up a feeling that my return would in some way put power into my hands, and instead I found myself a mere undistinguished unit in a vast but rather vague majority. There were moments when I felt very distinctly that a majority could be too big a crowd altogether. I had all my work still before me, I had achieved nothing as yet but opportunity, and a very crowded opportunity it was at that. Every one about me was chatting parliament and appointments; one breathed distracting and irritating speculations as to what would be done and who would be asked to do it. I was chiefly impressed by what was unlikely to be done and by the absence of any general plan of legislation to hold us all together. I found the talk about parliamentary procedure and etiquette particularly trying. We dined with the elder Cramptons one evening, and old Sir Edward was lengthily sage about what the House liked, what it didn't like, what made a good impression and what a bad one. "A man shouldn't speak more than twice in his first session and not at first on too contentious a topic," said Sir Edward. "No."

"Very much depends upon manner. The House hates a lecturer. There's a sort of airy earnestness——"

He waved his cigar to eke out his words.

"Little peculiarities of costume count for a great deal. I could name one man who spent three years living down a pair of spatter-dashers. On the other hand—a thing like that—if it catches the eye of the *Punch* man, for example, may be your making."

He went off into a lengthy speculation of why the House had come to like an originally unpopular Irishman named Biggar. . . .

The opening of Parliament gave me some peculiar moods. I began to feel more and more like a branded sheep. We were sworn in in batches, dozens and scores of fresh men, trying not to look too fresh under the inspection of policemen and messengers, all of us carrying new silk hats and wearing magisterial coats. It is one of my vivid memories from this period, the sudden outbreak of silk hats in the smoking-room of the National Liberal Club. At first I thought there must have been a funeral. Familiar faces, that one had grown to know under soft felt hats, under bowlers, under liberal-minded wide brims and above artistic ties and tweed jackets, suddenly met one, staring with the stern gaze of self-consciousness from

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under silk hats of incredible glossiness. There was a disposition to wear the hat much too forward, I thought, for a good Parliamentary style.

There was much play with the hats all through; a tremendous competition to get in first and put hats on coveted seats. A memory hangs about me of the House in the early afternoon, an inhuman desolation inhabited almost entirely by silk hats. The current use of cards to secure seats came later. There were yards and yards of empty green benches with hats and hats and hats distributed along them, resolute-looking top-hats, lax top-hats with a kind of shadowy grin under them, sensible top-hats brim upward and one scandalous incontinent that had rolled from the front Opposition bench right to the middle of the floor. A headless hat is surely the most soulless thing in the world, far worse even than a skull. . . .

At last, in a leisurely muddled manner we got to the Address; and I found myself packed in a dense elbowing crowd to the right of the Speaker's chair; while the attenuated Opposition, nearly leaderless after the massacre, tilted its brim to its nose and sprawled at its ease amidst its empty benches.

There was a tremendous hullabaloo about something, and I craned to see over the shoulder of the man in front. "Order, order, order!"

"What's it about?" I asked.

The man in front of me was clearly no better informed, and then I gathered from a slightly contemptuous Scotchman beside me that it was Chris Robinson had walked between the honourable member in possession of the House and the Speaker. I caught a glimpse of him blushingly whispering about his misadventure to a colleague. He was just that same little figure I had once assisted to entertain at Cambridge, but grey-haired now, and still it seemed with the same knitted muffler he had discarded for a reckless half-hour while he talked to us in Hatherleigh's rooms.

It dawned upon me that I wasn't particularly wanted in the House, and that I should get all I needed of the opening speeches next day from the *Times*.

I made my way out and was presently walking rather aimlessly through the outer lobby.

I caught myself regarding the shadow that spread itself out before me, multiplied itself in blue tints of various intensity, shuffled itself like a pack of cards under the many lights, the square shoulders, the silk hat, already worn with a parliamentary tilt backward; I found I was surveying this statesmanlike outline with a weak approval. "A *member!*" I felt the little cluster of people that were scattered about the lobby must be saying.

"Good God!" I said in hot reaction, "what am I doing here?"

It was one of those moments, infinitely trivial in themselves, that yet are cardinal in a man's life. It came to me with extreme vividness that it wasn't so much that I had got hold of something as that something had got hold of me. I distinctly recall the rebound of my mind. Whatever happened in this Parliament, I at least would attempt something. "By God!" I said, "I won't be overwhelmed. I am here to do something and do something I will!"

But I felt that for the moment I could not remain in the House.

I went out by myself with my thoughts into the night. It was a chilling night, and rare spots of rain were falling. I glanced over my shoulder at the lit windows of the Lords. I walked, I remember, westward, and presently came to the Grosvenor Embankment and followed it,

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watching the glittering black rush of the river and the dark, dimly lit barges round which the water swirled. Across the river was the hunched sky-line of Doulton's potteries, and a kiln flared redly. Dimly luminous trams were gliding amidst a dotted line of lamps, and two little trains crawled into Waterloo station. Mysterious black figures came by me and were suddenly changed to the commonplace at the touch of the nearer lamps. It was a big confused world, I felt, for a man to lay his hands upon.

I remember I crossed Vauxhall Bridge and stood for a time watching the huge black shapes in the darkness under the gasworks. A shoal of coal barges lay indistinctly on the darkly shining mud and water below, and a colossal crane was perpetually hauling up coal into mysterious blacknesses above, and dropping the empty clutch back to the barges. Just one or two minute black featureless figures of men toiled amidst these monster shapes. They did not seem to be controlling them, but only moving about among them. These gasworks have a big chimney that belches a lurid flame into the night, a livid shivering bluish flame, shot with strange crimson streaks. . . .

On the other side of Lambeth Bridge broad stairs go down to the lapping water of the river; the lower steps are luminous under the lamps and one treads unwarned into thick soft Thames mud. They seem to be purely architectural steps, they lead nowhere, they have an air of absolute indifference to mortal ends.

Those shapes and large inhuman places—for all of mankind that one sees at night about Lambeth is minute and pitiful beside the industrial monsters that snort and toil there—mix up inextricably with my memories of my first days as a legislator. Black figures drift by me, heavy vans clatter, a newspaper rough tears by on a motor bicycle, and presently, on the Albert Embankment, every seat has its one or two outcasts huddled together and slumbering.

"These things come, these things go," a whispering voice urged upon me, "as once those vast unmeaning Saurians whose bones encumber museums came and went, rejoicing noisily in fruitless lives." . . .

Fruitless lives!—was that the truth of it all? . . .

Later I stood within sight of the Houses of Parliament in front of the colonnades of St. Thomas's Hospital. I leant on the parapet close by a lamp-stand of twisted dolphins—and I prayed!

I remember the swirl of the tide upon the water, and how a string of barges presently came swinging and bumping round as high-water turned to ebb. That sudden change of position and my brief perplexity at it sticks like a paper pin through the substance of my thoughts. It was then I was moved to prayer. I prayed that night that life might not be in vain, that in particular I might not live in vain. I prayed for strength and faith, that the monstrous blundering forces in life might not overwhelm me, might not beat me back to futility and a meaningless acquiescence in existent things. I knew myself for the weakling I was, I knew that nevertheless it was set for me to make such order as I could out of these disorders and my task cowed me, gave me at the thought of it a sense of yielding feebleness.

"Break me, O God," I prayed at last, "disgrace me, torment me, destroy me as you will, but save me from self-complacency and little interests and little successes and the life that passes like the shadow of a dream."

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BOOK THE THIRD: THE HEART OF POLITICS

CHAPTER THE FIRST

THE RIDDLE FOR THE STATESMAN

§ 1. I HAVE been planning and replanning, writing and rewriting this next portion of my book for many days. I perceive I must leave it raw-edged and ill-joined. In doing it I have learnt something of the impossibility of History. For all I have had to tell is the story of one man's convictions and aims and how they reacted upon his life; and I find it too subtle and involved and intricate for the doing. I find it tax all my powers to convey even the main forms and forces in that development. It is like looking through moving media of changing hue and variable refraction at something vitally unstable. Broad theories and generalisations are mingled with personal influences, with prevalent prejudices; and not only coloured but altered by phases of hopefulness and moods of depression. The web is made up of the most diverse elements, beyond treatment multitudinous. . . . For a week or so I desisted altogether, and walked over the mountains and returned to sit through the warm soft mornings among the shaded rocks above this little perched-up house of ours, discussing my difficulties with Isabel and I think on the whole complicating them further in the effort to simplify them to manageable and stateable elements.

Let me, nevertheless, attempt a rough preliminary analysis of this confused process. A main strand is quite easily traceable. This main strand is the story of my obvious life, my life as it must have looked to most of my acquaintances. It presents you with a young couple, bright, hopeful, and energetic, starting out under Altiora's auspices to make a career. You figure us well dressed and active, running about in motor-cars, visiting in great people's houses, dining amidst brilliant companies, going to the theatre, meeting in the lobby. Margaret wore hundreds of beautiful dresses. We must have had an air of succeeding meritoriously during that time.

We did very continually and faithfully serve our joint career. I thought about it a great deal, and did and refrained from doing ten thousand things for the sake of it. I kept up a solicitude for it, as it were by inertia, long after things had happened and changes occurred in me that rendered its completion impossible. Under certain very artless pretences, we wanted steadfastly to make a handsome position in the world, achieve respect, *succeed*. Enormous unseen changes had been in progress for years in my mind and the realities of my life, before our general circle could have had any inkling of their existence, or suspected the appearances of our life. Then suddenly our proceedings began to be deflected, our outward unanimity visibly strained and marred by the insurgence of these so long-hidden developments.

That career had its own hidden side, of course; but when I write of these unseen factors I do not mean that, but something altogether broader. I do not mean the everyday pettinesses which gave the cynical observer scope and told of a narrower, baser aspect of the fair but limited ambitions of my ostensible self. This "sub-careerist" element noted little things

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that affected the career, made me suspicious of the rivalry of So-and-so, propitiatory to So-and-so, whom, as a matter of fact, I didn't respect or feel in the least sympathetic towards, guarded with that man, who for all his charm and interest wasn't helpful, and a little touchy at the appearance of neglect from that. No; I mean something greater, and not something smaller, when I write of a hidden life.

In the ostensible self who glowed under the approbation of Altiora Bailey, and was envied and discussed, praised and depreciated, in the House and in smoking-room gossip, you really have as much of a man as usually figures in a novel or an obituary notice. But I am tremendously impressed now in the retrospect by the realisation of how little that frontage represented me, and just how little such frontages do represent the complexities of the intelligent contemporary. Behind it, yet struggling to disorganise and alter it altogether, was a far more essential reality, a self less personal, less individualised, and broader in its references. Its aims were never simply to get on; it had an altogether different system of demands and satisfactions. It was critical, curious, more than a little unfeeling and relentlessly illuminating. . . .

It is just the existence and development of this more generalised self-behind-the-frontage that is making modern life so much more subtle and intricate to render and so much more hopeful in its relations to the perplexities of the universe. I see this mental and spiritual hinterland vary enormously in the people about me, between a type which seems to keep, as people say, all its goods in the window, to others who, like myself, come to regard the ostensible existence more and more as a mere experimental feeder and agent for that greater personality behind. And this back-self has its history and phases, its crises and happy accidents and irrevocable conclusions, more or less distinct from the adventures and achievements of the ostensible self. It meets persons and phrases, it assimilates the spirit of a book, it is startled into new realisations by some accident that seems altogether irrelevant to the general tenor of one's life. Its increasing independence of the ostensible career makes it the organ of corrective criticism; it accumulates disturbing energy. Then it breaks our overt promises and repudiates our pledges, coming down at last like an overbearing mentor upon the small engagements of the pupil.

In the life of the individual it presents more and more to my mind the image of the *rôle* that the growth of philosophy, science, and creative literature may play in the development of mankind.

§ 2. It is curious to recall how Britten helped shatter that obvious, lucidly explicable presentation of myself upon which I had embarked with Margaret. He returned to revive a memory of adolescent dreams and a habit of adolescent frankness; he reached through my shallow frontage as no one else seemed capable of doing, and dragged that back-self into relation with it.

I remember very distinctly a dinner and a subsequent walk with him which presents itself now as altogether typical of the quality of his influence.

I had come upon him one day while lunching with Somers and Sutt at the Playwrights' Club, and had asked him to dinner on the spur of the moment. He was oddly the same curly-headed, red-faced ventriloquist,

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and oddly different, rather seedy as well as untidy, and at first a little inclined to make comparisons with my sleek successfulness. But that disposition presently evaporated, and his talk was good and fresh and provocative. And something that had long been straining at its checks in my mind flapped over, and he and I found ourselves of one accord.

Altiora wasn't at this dinner. When she came matters were apt to become confusedly strenuous. There was always a slight and ineffectual struggle at the end on the part of Margaret to anticipate Altiora's overpowering tendency to a rally and the establishment of some entirely unjustifiable conclusion by a *coup de main*. When, however, Altiora was absent, the quieter influence of the Cramptons prevailed; temperance and information for its own sake prevailed excessively over dinner and the play of thought. . . . Good Lord! what bores the Cramptons were! I wonder I endured them as I did. They had all of them the trick of lying in wait conversationally; they had no sense of the self-exposures, the gallant experiments in statement that are necessary for good conversation. They would watch one talking with an expression exactly like peeping through bushes. Then they would, as it were, dash out, dissent succinctly, contradict some secondary fact, and back to cover. They gave one twilight nerves. Their wives were easier but still difficult at a stretch; they talked a good deal about children and servants, but with an air caught from Altiora of making observations upon sociological types. Lewis gossiped about the House in an entirely finite manner. He never raised a discussion. Nobody ever raised a discussion. He would ask what we thought of Evesham's question that afternoon, and Edward would say it was good, and Mrs. Willie, who had been behind the grille, would think it was very good, and then Willie, parting the branches, would say rather conclusively that he didn't think it was very much good, and I would deny hearing the question in order to evade a profitless statement of views in that vacuum, and then we would cast about in our minds for some other topic of equal interest. . . .

On this occasion Altiora was absent, and to qualify our Young Liberal bleakness we had Mrs. Millingham, with her white hair and her fresh mind and complexion, and Esmeer. Willie Crampton was with us, but not his wife, who was having her third baby on principle; his brother Edward was present, and the Lewises, and of course the Bunting Harblows. There was also some other lady. I remember her as pale blue, but for the life of me I cannot remember her name.

Quite early there was a little breeze between Edward Crampton and Esmeer, who had ventured an opinion about the partition of Poland. Edward was at work then upon the seventh volume of his monumental Life of Kosciusko, and a little impatient with views perhaps not altogether false but betraying a lamentable ignorance of accessible literature. At any rate, his correction of Esmeer was magisterial. After that there was a distinct and not altogether delightful pause, and then some one, it may have been the pale-blue lady, asked Mrs. Lewis whether her aunt, Lady Carmixter, had returned from her rest and sun-cure in Italy. That led to a rather anxiously sustained talk about regimen, and Willie told us how he had profited by the no-breakfast system. It had increased his power of work enormously. He could get through ten hours a day now without inconvenience.

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"What do you do?" said Esmeer abruptly.

"Oh! no end of work. There's all the estate and looking after things."

"But publicly?"

"I asked three questions yesterday. And for one of them I had to consult nine books."

We were drifting, I could see, towards Doctor Haig's system of dietary, and whether the exclusion or inclusion of fish and chicken were most conducive to high efficiency, when Britten, who had refused lemonade and claret and demanded Burgundy, broke out, and was discovered to be demanding in his throat just what we Young Liberals thought we were used to?

"I want," said Britten, repeating his challenge a little louder, "to hear just exactly what you think you are doing in Parliament?"

Lewis laughed nervously, and thought we were "Seeking the Good of the Community."

"*How?*"

"Beneficent Legislation," said Lewis.

"Beneficent in what direction?" insisted Britten. "I want to know where you think you are going."

"Amelioration of Social Conditions," said Lewis.

"That's only a phrase!"

"You wouldn't have me sketch bills at dinner?"

"I'd like you to indicate directions," said Britten, and waited.

"Upward and On," said Lewis with conscious neatness, and turned to ask Mrs. Bunting Harblow about her little boy's French.

For a time talk frothed over Britten's head, but the natural mischief in Mrs. Millingham had been stirred, and she was presently echoing his demand in lisping, quasi-confidential undertones. "What *are* we Liberals doing?" Then Esmeer fell in with the revolutionaries.

To begin with, I was a little shocked by this clamour for fundamentals—and a little disconcerted. I had the experience that I suppose comes to every one at times of discovering oneself together with two different sets of people with whom one has maintained two different sets of attitudes. It had always been, I perceived, an instinctive suppression in our circle that we shouldn't be more than vague about our political ideals. It had almost become part of my morality to respect this convention. It was understood we were all working hard, and keeping ourselves fit, tremendously fit, under Altiora's inspiration, Pro Bono Publico. Bunting Harblow had his under-secretaryship, and Lewis was on the verge of the Cabinet, and these things we considered to be in the nature of confirmations. . . . It added to the discomfort of the situation that these plunging inquiries were being made in the presence of our wives.

The rebel section of our party forced the talk.

Edward Crampton was presently declaring—I forget in what relation: "The country is with us."

My long-controlled hatred of the Cramptons' stereotyped phrases about the Country and the House got the better of me. I showed my cloven hoof to my friends for the first time.

"We don't respect the Country as we used to do," I said. "We haven't the same belief we used to have in the will of the people. It's no good Crampton trying to keep that up. We Liberals know as a matter of fact

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—nowadays every one knows—that the monster that brought us into power has, among other deficiencies, no head. We've got to give it one—if possible with brains and a will. That lies in the future. For the present if the country is with us, it means merely that we happen to have hold of its tether."

Lewis was shocked. A " mandate " from the Country was sacred to his system of pretences.

Britten wasn't subdued by his first rebuff ; presently he was at us again. There were several attempts to check his outbreak of interrogation ; I remember the Cramptons asked questions about the welfare of various cousins of Lewis who were unknown to the rest of us, and Margaret tried to engage Britten in a sympathetic discussion of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition. But Britten and Esmeer were persistent, Mrs. Millingham mischievous, and in the end our rising hopes of Young Liberalism took to their thickets for good, while we talked all over them of the prevalent vacuity of political intentions. Margaret was perplexed by me. It is only now I perceive just how perplexing I must have been. "Of course," she said with that faint stress of apprehension in her eyes, "one must have aims." And, "It isn't always easy to put everything into phrases." "Don't be long," said Mrs. Edward Crampton to her husband as the wives trooped out. And afterwards when we went upstairs I had an indefinable persuasion that the ladies had been criticising Britten's share in our talk in an altogether unfavourable spirit. Mrs. Crampton evidently thought him aggressive and impertinent, and Margaret took him at once into a corner and showed him Italian photographs by Coburn. We dispersed early.

I walked with Britten along the Chelsea back streets towards Battersea Bridge—he lodged on the south side.

" Mrs. Millingham's a dear," he began.

" She's a dear."

" I liked her demand for a hansom because a four-wheeler was too safe."

" She was worked up," I said. " She's a woman of faultless character, but her instincts, as Altiora would say, are anarchistic—when she gives them a chance."

" So she takes it out in hansom cabs."

" Hansom cabs."

" She's wise," said Britten. . . .

" I hope, Remington," he went on after a pause, " I didn't rag your other guests too much. I've a sort of feeling at moments— Remington, those chaps are so infernally not—not bloody. It's part of a man's duty sometimes at least to eat red beef and get drunk. How is he to understand government if he doesn't ? It scares me to think of your lot—by a sort of misapprehension—being in power. A kind of neuralgia in the head, by way of government. I don't understand where *you* come in. Those others—they've no lusts. Their ideal is anæmia. You and I, we had at least a lust to take hold of life and make something of it. They—they want to take hold of life and make nothing of it. They want to cut out all the stimulants. Just as though life was anything else but a reaction to stimulation . . . ! "

He began to talk of his own life. He had had ill-fortune through most of it. He was poor and unsuccessful, and a girl he had been very

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fond of had been attacked and killed by a horse in a field in a very horrible manner. These things had wounded and tortured him, but they hadn't broken him. They had, it seemed to me, made a kind of crippled and ugly demi-god of him. He was, I began to perceive, so much better than I had any right to expect. At first I had been rather struck by his unkempt look, and it made my reaction all the stronger. There was about him something, a kind of raw and bleeding faith in the deep things of life, that stirred me profoundly, as he showed it. My set of people had irritated him and disappointed him. I discovered at his touch how they irritated me. He reproached me boldly. He made me feel ashamed of my easy acquiescences as I walked in my sleek tall neatness beside his rather old coat, his rather battered hat, his sturdier shorter shape, and listened to his denunciations of our self-satisfied New Liberalism and Progressivism.

"It has the same relation to progress—the reality of progress—that the things they paint on door panels in the suburbs have to art and beauty. There's a sort of filiation. . . . Your Altiora's just the political equivalent of the ladies who sell traced cloth for embroidery; she's a dealer in Refined Social Reform for the Parlour. The real progress, Remington, is a graver thing and a painfuller thing and a slower thing altogether. Look! *that*" —and he pointed to where under a hoarding in the light of a gas-lamp a dingy prostitute stood lurking—"was in Babylon and Nineveh. Your little lot make believe there won't be anything of the sort after this Parliament! They're going to vanish at a few top notes from Altiora Bailey! Remington!—It's foolery. It's prigs at play. It's make-believe, make-believe! Your people there haven't got hold of things, aren't beginning to get hold of things, don't know anything of life at all, shirk life, avoid life, get in little bright clean rooms and talk big over your bumpers of lemonade while the Night goes by outside—untouched. Those Crampton fools slink by all this,"—he waved at the woman again—"pretend it doesn't exist, or is going to be banished root and branch by an Act to keep children in the wet outside public-houses. Do you think they really care, Remington? *I* don't. It's make-believe. What they want to do, what Lewis wants to do, what Mrs. Bunting Harblow wants her husband to do, is to sit and feel very grave and necessary and respected on the Government benches. They think of putting their feet out like statesmen, and tilting shiny hats with becoming brims down over their successful noses. Presentation portrait to a club at fifty. That's their Reality. That's their scope. They don't, it's manifest, *want* to think beyond that. The things there *are*, Remington, they'll never face! The wonder and the depth of life—lust, and the night-sky—pain."

"But the good intention," I pleaded, "the Good Will!"

"Sentimentality," said Britten. "No Good Will is anything but dishonesty unless it frets and burns and hurts and destroys a man. That lot of yours have nothing but a good will to think they have good will. Do you think they lie awake of nights searching their hearts as we do? Lewis? Crampton? Or those neat, admiring, satisfied little wives? See how they shrank from the probe!"

"We all," I said, "shrink from the probe."

"God help us!" said Britten. . . .

"We are but vermin at the best, Remington," he broke out, "and the greatest saint only a worm that has lifted its head for a moment from the

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dust. We are damned, we are meant to be damned, coral animalculæ building upward, upward in a sea of damnation. But of all the damned things that ever were damned, your damned shirking, temperate, sham-efficient, self-satisfied, respectable, make-believe, Fabian-spirited Young Liberal is the utterly damnedest." He paused for a moment, and resumed in an entirely different note: "Which is why I was so surprised, Remington, to find *you* in this set!"

"You're just the old plunger you used to be, Britten," I said. "You're going too far with all your might for the sake of the damns. Like a donkey that drags its cart up a bank to get thistles. There's depths in Liberalism—"

"We were talking about Liberals."

"Liberty!"

"Liberty! What do *your* little lot know of liberty?"

"What does any little lot know of liberty?"

"It waits outside, too big for our understanding. Like the night and the stars. And lust, Remington! lust and bitterness! Don't I know them? with all the sweetness and hope of life bitten and trampled, the dear eyes and the brain that loved and understood—and my poor mumble of a life going on! I'm within sight of being a drunkard, Remington! I'm a failure by most standards! Life has cut me to the bone. But I'm not afraid of it any more. I've paid something of the price, I've seen something of the meaning."

He flew off at a tangent. "I'd rather die in Delirium Tremens," he cried, "than be a Crampton or a Lewis. . . ."

"Make-believe. Make-believe." The phrase and Britten's squat gestures haunted me as I walked homeward alone. I went to my room and stood before my desk and surveyed papers and files and Margaret's admirable equipment of me.

I perceived in the lurid light of Britten's suggestions that so it was Mr. George Alexander would have staged a statesman's private room. . . .

§ 3. I was never at any stage a loyal party man. I doubt if party will ever again be the force it was during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Men are becoming increasingly constructive and selective, less patient under tradition and the bondage of initial circumstances. As education becomes more universal and liberating men will sort themselves more and more by their intellectual temperaments and less and less by their accidental associations. The past will rule them less; the future more. It is not simply party but school and college and county and country that lose their glamour. One does not hear nearly as much as our forefathers did of the "old Harrovian," "old Arvonian," "old Etonian" claim to this or that unfair advantage or unearnt sympathy. Even the Scotch and the Devonians weaken a little in their clannishness. A widening sense of fair play destroys such things. They follow freemasonry down—freemasonry of which one is chiefly reminded nowadays in England by propitiatory symbols outside shady public-houses. . . .

There is, of course, a type of man which clings very obstinately to party ties. These are the men with strong reproductive imaginations and no imaginative initiative, such men as Cladingbowl, for example, or Dayton. They are the scholars-at-large in life. For them the fact that the party

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system has been essential in the history of England for two hundred years gives it an overwhelming glamour. They have read histories and memoirs, they see the great grey pile of Westminster not so much for what it is as what it was, rich with dramatic memories, populous with glorious ghosts, phrasing itself inevitably in anecdotes and quotations. It seems almost scandalous that new things should continue to happen, swamping with strange qualities the savour of these old associations.

That Mr. Ramsay Macdonald should walk through Westminster Hall, thrust himself, it may be, through the very piece of space that once held Charles the Martyr pleading for his life, seems horrible profanation to Dayton, a last posthumous outrage, and he would, I think, like to have the front benches left empty now for ever, or at most adorned with laureated ivory tablets, "Here Dizzy sat," and "On this Spot William Ewart Gladstone made his First Budget Speech." Failing this, he demands, if only as signs of modesty and respect on the part of the survivors, meticulous imitation. "Mr. G.," he murmurs, "would not have done that," and laments a vanished subtlety even while Mr. Evesham is speaking. He is always gloomily disposed to lapse into wonderings about what things are coming to, wonderings that have no grain of curiosity. His conception of perfect conduct is industrious persistence along the worn-down, well-marked grooves of the great recorded days. So infinitely more important to him is the documented, respected thing than the elusive present.

Cladingbowl and Dayton do not shine in the House, though Cladingbowl is a sound man on a committee, and Dayton keeps the *Old Country Gazette*, the most gentlemanlike paper in London. They prevail, however, in their clubs at lunch time. There, with the pleasant consciousness of a morning's work free from either zeal or shirking they mingle with permanent officials, prominent lawyers, even a few of the soberer type of business men, and relax their minds in the discussion of the morning paper, of the architecture of the West End, of the latest public appointments, of golf, of holiday resorts, of the last judicial witticisms and forensic "crushers." The New Year and Birthday honours lists are always very sagely and exhaustively considered, and anecdotes are popular and keenly judged. They do not talk of the things that are really active in their minds, but in the formal and habitual manner they suppose to be proper to intelligent but still honourable men. Socialism, money matters, and religion are forbidden topics, and sex and women only in so far as they appear in the law courts. It is to me the strangest of conventions, this assumption of unreal loyalties and traditional respects, this repudiation and concealment of passionate interests. It is like wearing gloves in summer fields, or bathing in a gown, or falling in love with the heroine of a novel, or writing under a pseudonym, or becoming a masked Tuareg. . . .

It is not, I think, that men of my species are insensitive to the great past that is embodied in Westminster and its traditions; we are not so much wanting in the historical sense as alive to the greatness of our present opportunities and the still vaster future that is possible to us. London is the most interesting, beautiful, and wonderful city in the world to me, delicate in her incidental and multitudinous littleness, and stupendous in her pregnant totality: I cannot bring myself to use her as a museum or an old bookshop. When I think of Whitehall that little affair on the scaffold outside the Banqueting Hall seems trivial and remote in comparison with

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the possibilities that offer themselves to my imagination within the great grey Government buildings close at hand. . . .

It gives me a qualm of nostalgia even to name those places now. I think of St. Stephen's tower streaming upwards into the misty London night and the great wet quadrangle of New Palace Yard, from which the hansom cabs of my first experiences were ousted more and more by taxi-cabs as the second Parliament of King Edward the Seventh aged; I think of the Admiralty and War Office with their tall Marconi masts sending out invisible threads of direction to the armies in the camps, to great fleets about the world. The crowded, darkly shining river goes flooding through my memory once again, on to those narrow seas that part us from our rival nations; I see quadrangles and corridors of empty grey-looking offices in which undistinguished little men and little files of papers link us to islands in the tropics, to frozen wildernesses gashed for gold, to vast temple-studded plains, to forest worlds and mountain worlds, to ports and fortresses and lighthouses and watch-towers and grazing lands and corn lands all about the globe. Once more I traverse Victoria Street, grimy and dark, where the agents of the Empire jostle one another, pass the big embassies in the West End with their flags and scutcheons, follow the broad avenue that leads to Buckingham Palace, witness the coming and going of troops and officials and guests along it from every land on earth. . . . Interwoven in the texture of it all, mocking, perplexing, stimulating beyond measure, is the gleaming consciousness, the challenging knowledge: "You and your kind might still, if you could but grasp it here, mould all the destiny of Man!"

§ 4. My first three years in Parliament were years of active discontent. The little group of younger Liberals to which I belonged was very ignorant of the traditions and qualities of our older leaders, and quite out of touch with the mass of the party. For a time Parliament was enormously taken up with moribund issues and old quarrels. The early Educational legislation was sectarian and unenterprising, and the Licensing Bill went little further than the attempted rectification of a Conservative mistake. I was altogether for the nationalisation of the public-house, and of this end the Bill gave no intimations. It was just beer-baiting. I was recalcitrant almost from the beginning, and spoke against the Government so early as the second reading of the first Education Bill, the one the Lords rejected in 1906. I went a little beyond my intention in the heat of speaking—it is a way with inexperienced men. I called the Bill timid, narrow, a mere sop to the jealousies of sects and little-minded people. I contrasted its aim and methods with the manifest needs of the time.

I am not a particularly good speaker; after the manner of a writer I worry to fine my meaning too much; but this was one of my successes. I spoke after dinner and to a fairly full House, for people were already a little curious about me because of my writings. Several of the Conservative leaders were present and stayed, and Mr. Evesham, I remember, came ostentatiously to hear me, with that engaging friendliness of his, and gave me at the first chance an approving "Hear, Hear!" I can still recall quite distinctly my two futile attempts to catch the Speaker's eye before I was able to begin, the nervous quiver of my rather too-prepared opening, the effect of hearing my own voice and my subconscious wonder as to

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what I could possibly be talking about, the realisation that I was getting on fairly well, the immense satisfaction afterwards of having on the whole brought it off, and the absurd gratitude I felt for that encouraging cheer.

Addressing the House of Commons is like no other public speaking in the world. Its semi-colloquial methods give it an air of being easy, but its shifting audience, the comings and goings and hesitations of members behind the chair—not mere audience units, but men who matter—the desolating emptiness that spreads itself round the man who fails to interest, the little compact, disciplined crowd in the Strangers' Gallery, the light, elusive, flickering movements high up behind the grille, the wigged, attentive, weary Speaker, the table and the mace and the chapel-like Gothic background with its sombre shadows, conspire together, produce a confused, uncertain feeling in me, as though I was walking upon a pavement full of trap-doors and patches of uncovered morass. A misplaced, well-meant "Hear, Hear!" is apt to be extraordinarily disconcerting, and under no other circumstances have I had to speak with quite the same sideways twist that the arrangement of the House imposes. One does not recognise one's own voice threading out into the stirring brown. Unless I was excited or speaking to the mind of some particular person in the House, I was apt to lose my feeling of an auditor. I had no sense of whither my sentences are going, such as one has with a public meeting well under one's eye. And to lose one's sense of an auditor is for a man of my temperament to lose one's sense of the immediate, and to become prolix and vague with qualifications.

§ 5. My discontents with the Liberal party and my mental exploration of the quality of party generally is curiously mixed up with certain impressions of things and people in the National Liberal Club. The National Liberal Club is Liberalism made visible in the flesh—and Doulton-ware. It is an extraordinary big club done in a bold, wholesale, shiny, marbled style, richly furnished with numerous paintings, steel engravings, busts, and full-length statues of the late Mr. Gladstone; and its spacious dining-rooms, its long, hazy, crowded smoking-room with innumerable little tables and groups of men in arm-chairs, its magazine room and library upstairs, have just that undistinguished and unconcentrated diversity which is for me the Liberal note. The pensive member sits and hears perplexing dialects and even fragments of foreign speech, and among the clustering masses of less insistent whites his roving eye catches profiles and complexions that send his mind afield to Calcutta or Rangoon or the West Indies or Sierra Leone or the Cape. . . .

I was not infrequently that pensive member. I used to go to the Club to doubt about Liberalism.

About two o'clock in the day the great smoking-room is crowded with countless little groups. They sit about small round tables, or in circles of chairs, and the haze of tobacco seems to prolong the great narrow place, with its pillars and bays, to infinity. Some of the groups are big, as many as a dozen men talk in loud tones; some are duologues, and there is always a sprinkling of lonely, dissociated men. At first, one gets an impression of men going from group to group and as it were linking them, but as one watches closely one finds that these men just visit three or four groups at the outside, and know nothing of the others. One begins to perceive more

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and more distinctly that one is dealing with a sort of human mosaic ; that each patch in that great place is of a different quality and colour from the next and never to be mixed with it. Most clubs have a common link, a lowest common denominator in the Club Bore, who spares no one, but even the National Liberal bores are specialised and sectional. As one looks round one sees here a clump of men from the North Country or the Potteries, here an island of South London politicians, here a couple of young Jews ascendant from Whitechapel, here a circle of journalists and writers, here a group of Irish politicians, here two East Indians, here a priest or so, here a clump of old-fashioned Protestants, here a little knot of eminent Rationalists indulging in a blasphemous story *sotto voce*. Next them are a group of anglicised Germans and highly specialised chess-players, and then two of the oddest-looking persons—bulging with documents and intent upon extraordinary business trasanctions over long cigars. . . .

I would listen to a stormy sea of babblement, and try to extract some constructive intimations. Every now and then I got a whiff of politics. It was clear they were against the Lords—against plutocrats—against Cossington's newspapers—against the brewers. . . . It was tremendously clear what they were against. The trouble was to find out what on earth they were *for!* . . .

As I sat and thought, the streaked and mottled pillars and walls, the various views, aspects, and portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, the partitions of polished mahogany, the yellow-vested waiters, would dissolve and vanish, and I would have a vision of this sample of miscellaneous men of limited, diverse interests and a universal littleness of imagination enlarged, unlimited, no longer a sample but a community, spreading, stretching out to infinity—all in little groups and duologues and circles, all with their special and narrow concerns, all with their backs to most of the others.

What but a common antagonism would ever keep these multitudes together ? I understood why modern electioneering is more than half of it denunciation. Let us condemn, if possible, let us obstruct and deprive, but not let us do. There is no real appeal to the commonplace mind in "Let us do." That calls for the creative imagination, and few have been accustomed to respond to that call. The other merely needs jealousy and hate, of which there are great and easily accessible reservoirs in every human heart. . . .

I remember that vision of endless, narrow, jealous individuality very vividly. A seething limitlessness it became at last, like a waste place covered by crawling locusts that men sweep up by the sack-load and drown by the million in ditches. . . .

Grotesquely against it came the lean features, the sidelong shy movements of Edward Crampton, seated in a circle of talkers close at hand. I had a whiff of his strained unmusical voice, and behold ! he was saying something about the "Will of the People. . . ."

The immense and wonderful disconnectednesses of human life ! I forgot the smoke and jabber of the club altogether ; I became a lonely spirit flung high by some queer accident, a stone upon a ledge in some high and rocky wilderness, and below as far as the eye could reach stretched the swarming infinitesimals of humanity, like grass upon the field, like pebbles upon unbounded beaches. Was there ever to be in human life more than that endless struggling individualism ? Was there indeed

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some giantry, some immense valiant synthesis, still to come—or present it might be and still unseen by me, or was this the beginning and withal the last phase of mankind ? . . .

I glimpsed for a while the stupendous impudence of our ambitions, the tremendous enterprise to which the modern statesman is implicitly addressed. I was, as it were, one of a little swarm of would-be reef-builders looking back at the teeming slime upon the ocean floor. All the history of mankind, all the history of life, has been and will be the story of something struggling out of the indiscriminated abyss, struggling to exist and prevail over and comprehend individual lives—an effort of insidious attraction, an idea of invincible appeal. That something greater than ourselves, which does not so much exist as seek existence, palpitating between being and not-being, how marvellous it is! It has worn the form and visage of ten thousand different Gods, sought a shape for itself in stone and ivory and music and wonderful words, spoken more and more clearly of a mystery of love, a mystery of unity, dabbling meanwhile in blood and cruelty beyond the common impulses of men. It is something that comes and goes, like a light that shines and is withdrawn ; is withdrawn so completely that one doubts if it has ever been. . . .

§ 6. I would mark with a curious interest the stray country member of the club up in town for a night or so. My mind would be busy with speculations about him, about his home, his family, his reading, his horizons, his innumerable fellows who didn't belong and never came up. I would fill in the outline of him with memories of my uncle and his Staffordshire neighbours. He was perhaps Alderman This or Councillor That down there, a great man in his ward, J.P. within seven miles of the boundary of the borough, and a god in his home. Here he was nobody, and very shy, and either a little too arrogant or a little too meek towards our very democratic mannered but still liveried waiters. Was he perhaps the backbone of England ? He overate himself lest he should appear mean, went through our Special Dinner conscientiously, drank, unless he was teetotal, of unfamiliar wines, and did his best, in spite of the rules, to tip. Afterwards, in a state of flushed repletion, he would have old brandy, black coffee, and a banded cigar, or in the name of temperance omit the brandy and have rather more coffee, in the smoking-room. I would sit and watch that stiff dignity of self-indulgence, and wonder, wonder. . . .

An infernal clairvoyance would come to me. I would have visions of him in relation to his wife, checking always, sometimes bullying, sometimes being ostentatiously "kind" ; I would see him glance furtively at his domestic servants upon his staircase, or stiffen his upper lip against the reluctant, protesting business employee. We imaginative people are base enough, heaven knows, but it is only in rare moods of bitter penetration that we pierce down to the baser lusts, the viler shames, the everlasting lying and muddle-headed self-justification of the dull.

I would turn my eyes down the crowded room and see others of him and others. What did he think he was up to ? Did he for a moment realise that his presence under that ceramic glory of a ceiling with me meant, if it had any rational meaning at all, that we were jointly doing something with the nation and the empire and mankind ? . . . How on earth could any one get hold of him, make any noble use of him ? He didn't read beyond

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his newspaper. He never thought, but only followed imaginings in his heart. He never discussed. At the first hint of discussion his temper gave way. He was, I knew, a deep, thinly-covered tank of resentments and quite irrational moral rages. Yet withal I would have to resist an impulse to go over to him and nudge him and say to him, "Look here! What indeed do you think we are doing with the nation and the empire and mankind? You know—*Mankind!*"

I wonder what reply I should have got.

So far as any average could be struck and so far as any backbone could be located, it seemed to me that this silent, shy, replete, sub-angry, middle-class sentimentalist was in his endless species and varieties and dialects the backbone of our party. So far as I could be considered as representing anything in the House, I pretended to sit for the elements of *him*. . . .

§ 7. For a time I turned towards the Socialists. They at least had an air of coherent intentions. At that time Socialism had come into politics again after a period of depression and obscurity with a tremendous *éclat*. There was visibly a following of Socialist members to Chris Robinson; mysteriously uncommunicative gentlemen in soft felt hats and short coats and square-toed boots who replied to casual advances a little surprisingly in rich North-Country dialects. Members became aware of a "sea-green incorruptible," as Colonel Marlow put it to me, speaking on the Address, a slender twisted figure supporting itself on a stick and speaking with a fire that was altogether revolutionary. This was Philip Snowden, the member for Blackburn. They had come in nearly forty strong altogether, and with an air of presently meaning to come in much stronger. They were only one aspect of what seemed at that time a big national movement. Socialist societies, we gathered, were springing up all over the country, and every one was inquiring about Socialism and discussing Socialism. It had taken the Universities with particular force, and any youngster with the slightest intellectual pretension was either actively for or brilliantly against. For a time our Young Liberal group was ostentatiously sympathetic. . . .

When I think of the Socialists there comes a vivid memory of certain evening gatherings at our house. . . .

These gatherings had been organised by Margaret as the outcome of a discussion at the Baileys'. Altiora had been very emphatic and uncharitable upon the futility of the Socialist movement. It seemed that even the leaders fought shy of dinner-parties.

"They never meet each other," said Altiora, "much less people on the other side. How can they begin to understand politics until they do that?"

"Most of them have totally unpresentable wives," said Altiora, "totally!" and quoted instances, "and they *will* bring them. Or they won't come! Some of the poor creatures have scarcely learnt their table manners. They just make holes in the talk. . . ."

I thought there was a great deal of truth beneath Altiora's outburst. The presentation of the Socialist case seemed very greatly crippled by the want of a common intimacy in its leaders; the want of intimacy didn't at first appear to be more than an accident, and our talk led to Margaret's attempt to get acquaintance and easy intercourse afoot among them and between them and the Young Liberals of our group. She gave a series of

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weekly dinners, planned, I think, a little too accurately upon Altiora's model, and after each we had as catholic a reception as we could contrive.

Our receptions were indeed, I should think, about as catholic as receptions could be. Margaret found herself with a weekly houseful of insoluble problems in intercourse. One did one's best, but one got a nightmare feeling as the evening wore on.

It was one of the few unanimities of these parties that every one should be a little odd in appearance, funny about the hair or the tie or the shoes or more generally, and that bursts of violent aggression should alternate with an attitude entirely defensive. A number of our guests had an air of waiting for a clue that never came, and stood and sat about silently, mildly amused but not a bit surprised that we did not discover their distinctive Open-Sesames. There was a sprinkling of manifest seers and prophetesses in shapeless garments, far too many, I thought, for really easy social intercourse, and any conversation at any moment was liable to become oracular. One was in a state of tension from first to last; the most innocent remark seemed capable of exploding resentment, and replies came out at the most unexpected angles. We Young Liberals went about puzzled but polite to the gathering we had evoked. The Young Liberals' tradition is on the whole wonderfully discreet, superfluous steam is let out far away from home in the Balkans or Africa, and the neat, stiff figures of the Cramptons, Bunting Harblow, and Lewis, either in extremely well-cut morning-coats indicative of the House, or in what is sometimes written of as "faultless evening dress," stood about on those evenings, they and their very quietly and simply and expensively dressed little wives, like a datum-line amidst lakes and mountains.

I didn't at first see the connection between systematic social reorganisation and arbitrary novelties in dietary and costume, just as I didn't realise why the most comprehensive constructive projects should appear to be supported solely by odd and exceptional personalities. On one of these evenings a little group of rather jolly-looking pretty young people seated themselves for no particular reason in a large circle on the floor of my study, and engaged, so far as I could judge, in the game of Hunt the Meaning, the intellectual equivalent of Hunt the Slipper. It must have been that same evening I came upon an unbleached young gentleman before the oval mirror on the landing engaged in removing the remains of an anchovy sandwich from his protruded tongue—visible ends of cress having misled him into the belief that he was dealing with doctrinally permissible food. It was not unusual to be given handbills and printed matter by our guests, but there I had the advantage over Lewis, who was too tactful to refuse the stuff, too neatly dressed to pocket it, and had no writing-desk available upon which he could relieve himself in a manner flattering to the giver. So that his hands got fuller and fuller. A relentless, compact little woman in what Margaret declared to be an extremely expensive black dress has also printed herself on my memory; she had set her heart upon my contributing to a weekly periodical in the lentil interest with which she was associated, and I spent much time and care in evading her.

Mingling with the more hygienic types were a number of Anti-Puritan Socialists, bulging with bias against temperance, and breaking out against austere methods of living all over their faces. Their manner was packed with heartiness. They were apt to choke the approaches to the little buffet

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Margaret had set up downstairs, and there engage in discussions of Determinism—it always seemed to be Determinism—which became heartier and noisier, but never acrimonious even in the small hours. It seemed impossible to settle about this Determinism of theirs—ever. And there were worldly Socialists also. I particularly recall a large, active, buoyant, lady-killing individual with an eyeglass borne upon a broad black ribbon, who swam about us one evening. He might have been a slightly frayed actor, in his large frock-coat, his white waistcoat, and the sort of black and white check trousers that twinkle. He had a high-pitched voice with aristocratic intonations, and he seemed to be in a perpetual state of interrogation. "What are we all he-ar for?" he would ask only too audibly. "What are we doing he-ar? What's the connection?"

What *was* the connection?

We made a special effort with our last assembly in June 1907. We tried to get something like a representative collection of the parliamentary leaders of Socialism, the various exponents of Socialist thought and a number of Young Liberal thinkers into one room. Dorvil came, and Horatio Bulch; Featherstonehaugh appeared for ten minutes and talked charmingly to Margaret and then vanished again; there was Wilkins, the novelist, and Toomer and Dr. Tumpany. Chris Robinson stood about for a time in a new comforter, and Magdeberg and Will Pipes and five or six Labour members. And on our side we had our particular little group, Bunting Harblow, Crampton, Lewis, all looking as broad-minded and open to conviction as they possibly could, and even occasionally talking out from their bushes almost boldly. But the gathering as a whole refused either to mingle or dispute, and as an experiment in intercourse the evening was a failure. Unexpected dissociations appeared between Socialists one had supposed friendly. I could not have imagined it was possible for half so many people to turn their backs on everybody else in such small rooms as ours. But the unsaid things those backs expressed broke out, I remarked, with refreshed virulence in the various organs of the various sections of the party next week.

I talked, I remember, with Dr. Tumpany, a large young man in a still larger professional frock-coat, and with a great shock of very fair hair, who was candidate for some North-Country constituency. We discussed the political outlook, and, like so many Socialists at that time, he was full of vague threatenings against the Liberal party. I was struck by a thing in him that I had already observed less vividly in many others of these Socialist leaders, and which gave me at last a clue to the whole business. He behaved exactly like a man in possession of valuable patent rights, who wants to be dealt with. He had an air of having a corner in ideas. Then it flashed into my head that the whole Socialist movement was an attempted corner in ideas. . . .

§ 8. Late that night I found myself alone with Margaret amid the *débris* of the gathering.

I sat before the fire, hands in pockets, and Margaret, looking white and weary, came and leant upon the mantel.

"O Lord!" said Margaret.

I agreed. Then I resumed my meditation.

"Ideas," I said, "count for more than I thought in the world."

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Margaret regarded me with that neutral expression behind which she was accustomed to wait for clues.

"When you think of the height and depth and importance and wisdom of the Socialist ideas, and see the men who are running them," I explained. . . . "A big system of ideas like Socialism grows up out of the obvious common sense of our present conditions. It's as impersonal as science. All these men— They've given nothing to it. They're just people who have pegged out claims upon a big intellectual No-Man's-Land —and don't feel quite sure of the law. There's a sort of quarrelsome uneasiness. . . . If we professed Socialism, do you think they'd welcome us? Not a man of them! They'd feel it was burglary. . . ."

"Yes," said Margaret, looking into the fire. "That is just what *I* felt about them all the evening. . . . Particularly Dr. Tumpany."

"We mustn't confuse Socialism with the Socialists," I said; "that's the moral of it. I suppose if God were to find He had made a mistake in dates or something, and went back and annihilated everybody from Owen onwards who was in any way known as a Socialist leader or teacher, Socialism would be exactly where it is and what it is to-day—a growing realisation of constructive needs in every man's mind, and a little corner in party politics. So, I suppose, it will always be. . . . But they *were* a damned lot, Margaret!"

I looked up at the little noise she made. "*Twice!*" she said, smiling indulgently, "to-day!" Even the smile was Altiora's.

I returned to my thoughts. They *were* a damned human lot. It was an excellent word in that connection. . . .

But the ideas marched on, the ideas marched on, just as though men's brains were no more than stepping-stones, just as though some great brain in which we are all little cells and corpuscles was thinking them! . . .

"I don't think there is a man among them who makes me feel he is trustworthy," said Margaret; "unless it is Featherstonehaugh."

I sat taking in this proposition.

"They'll never help us, I feel," said Margaret.

"Us?"

"The Liberals."

"Oh, damn the Liberals!" I said. "They'll never even help themselves."

"I don't think I could possibly get on with any of those people," said Margaret, after a pause.

She remained for a time looking down at me and, I could feel, perplexed by me, but I wanted to go on with my thinking, and so I did not look up, and presently she stooped to my forehead and kissed me and went rustling softly to her room.

I remained in my study for a long time with my thoughts crystallising out. . . .

It was then, I think, that I first apprehended clearly how that opposition to which I have already alluded of the immediate life, and the mental hinterland of a man, can be applied to public and social affairs. The ideas go on—and no person or party succeeds in embodying them. The reality of human progress never comes to the surface, it is a power in the deeps, an undertow. It goes on in silence while men think, in studies where they write self-forgetfully, in laboratories under the urgency of an impersonal

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curiosity, in the rare illumination of honest talk, in moments of emotional insight, in thoughtful reading, but not in everyday affairs. Everyday affairs and whatever is made an everyday affair are transactions of the ostensible self, the being of habits, interests, usage. Temper, vanity, hasty reaction to imitation, personal feeling, are their substance. No man can abolish his immediate self and specialise in the depths ; if he attempt that, he simply turns himself into something a little less than the common man. He may have an immense hinterland, but that does not absolve him from a frontage. That is the essential error of the specialist philosopher, the specialist teacher, the specialist publicist. They repudiate frontage ; claim to be pure hinterland. That is what bothered me about Codger, about those various schoolmasters who had prepared me for life, about the Baileys and their dream of an official ruling class. A human being who is a philosopher in the first place, a teacher in the first place, or a statesman in the first place, is thereby and inevitably, though he bring God-like gifts to the pretence—a quack. These are attempts to live deep-side shallow, inside out. They produce merely a new pettiness. To understand Socialism again is to gain a new breadth of outlook ; to join a Socialist organisation is to join a narrow cult which is not even tolerably serviceable in presenting or spreading the ideas for which it stands. . . .

I perceived I had got something quite fundamental here. It had taken me some years to realise the true relation of the great constructive ideas that swayed me not only to political parties, but to myself. I had been disposed to identify the formulæ of some one party with social construction, and to regard the other as necessarily anti-constructive, just as I had been inclined to follow the Baileys in the self-righteousness of supposing myself to be wholly constructive. But I saw now that every man of intellectual freedom and vigour is necessarily constructive-minded nowadays, and that no man is disinterestedly so. Each one of us repeats in himself the conflict of the race between the splendour of its possibilities and its immediate associations. We may be shaping immortal things, but we must sleep and answer the dinner-gong, and have our salt of flattery and self-approval. In politics a man counts not for what he is in moments of imaginative expansion, but for his common, workaday, selfish self, and political parties are held together not by a community of ultimate aims, but by the stabler bond of an accustomed life. Everybody almost is for progress in general, and nearly everybody is opposed to any change, except in so far as gross increments are change, in his particular method of living and behaviour. Every party stands essentially for the interests and mental usages of some definite class or group of classes in the existing community, and every party has its scientific-minded and constructive leading section, with well-defined hinterlands formulating its social functions in a public-spirited form, and its superficial-minded following confessing its meannesses and vanities and prejudices. No class will abolish itself, materially alter its way of life, or drastically reconstruct itself, albeit no class is indisposed to co-operate in the unlimited socialisation of any other class. In that capacity for aggression upon other classes lies the essential driving force of modern affairs. The instincts, the persons, the parties, and vanities sway and struggle. The ideas and understandings march on and achieve themselves for all—in spite of every one. . . .

The methods and traditions of British politics maintain the form of

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two great parties, with rider groups seeking to gain specific ends in the event of a small Government majority. These two main parties are more or less heterogeneous in composition. Each, however, has certain necessary characteristics. The Conservative party has always stood quite definitely for the established propertied interests. The landowner, the big lawyer, the Established Church, and latterly the huge private monopoly of the liquor trade, which has been created by temperance legislation, are the essential Conservatives. Interwoven now with the native wealthy are the families of the great international usurers, and a vast miscellaneous mass of financial enterprise. Outside the range of resistance implied by these interests, the Conservative party has always shown itself just as constructive and collectivist as any other party. The great landowners have been as well disposed towards the endowment of higher education, and as willing to co-operate with the Church in protective and mildly educational legislation for children and the working class, as any political section. The financiers, too, are adventurous-spirited and eager for mechanical progress and technical efficiency. They are prepared to spend public money upon research, upon ports and harbours and public communications, upon sanitation and hygienic organisation. A certain rude benevolence of public intention is equally characteristic of the liquor trade. Provided his comfort leads to no excesses of temperance, the liquor trade is quite eager to see the common man prosperous, happy, and with money to spend in a bar. All sections of the party are aggressively patriotic and favourably inclined to the idea of an upstanding, well-fed, and well-exercised population in uniform. Of course there are reactionary landowners and old-fashioned country clergy, full of localised self-importance, jealous even of the cottager who can read, but they have neither the power nor the ability to retard the constructive forces in the party as a whole. On the other hand, when matters point to any definitely confiscatory proposal, to the public ownership and collective control of land, for example, or State mining and manufactures, or the nationalisation of the so-called public-house or extended municipal enterprise, or even to an increase of the taxation of property, then the Conservative party presents a nearly adamantine bar. It does not stand for, it *is*, the existing arrangement in these affairs.

Even more definitely a class party is the Labour party, whose immediate interest is to raise wages, shorten hours of labour, increase employment, and make better terms for the working-man tenant and working-man purchaser. Its leaders are no doubt constructive minded, but the mass of the following is naturally suspicious of education and discipline, hostile to the higher education, and—except for an obvious antagonism to employers and property owners—almost destitute of ideas. What else can it be ? It stands for the expropriated multitude, whose whole situation and difficulty arise from its individual lack of initiative and organising power. It favours the nationalisation of land and capital with no sense of the difficulties involved in the process ; but, on the other hand, the equally reasonable socialisation of individuals which is implied by military service is steadily and quite naturally and quite illogically opposed by it. It is only in recent years that Labour has emerged as a separate party from the huge hospitable caravanserai of Liberalism, and there is still a very marked tendency to step back again into that multitudinous assemblage.

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For multitudinousness has always been the Liberal characteristic. Liberalism never has been nor ever can be anything but a diversified crowd. Liberalism has to voice everything that is left out by these other parties. It is the party against the predominating interests. It is at once the party of the failing and of the untried; it is the party of decadence and hope. From its nature it must be a vague and planless association in comparison with its antagonist, neither so constructive on the one hand, nor on the other so competent to hinder the inevitable constructions of the civilised State. Essentially it is the party of criticism, the "Anti" party. It is a system of hostilities and objections that somehow achieves at times an elusive common soul. It is a gathering together of all the smaller interests which find themselves at a disadvantage against the big established classes, the leasehold tenant as against the landowner, the retail tradesman as against the merchant and moneylender, the Nonconformist as against the Churchman, the small employer as against the demoralising hospitable publican, the man without introductions and broad connections against the man who has these things. It is a party of the many small men against the fewer prevailing men. It has no more essential reason for loving the Collectivist State than the Conservatives; the small dealer is doomed to absorption in that just as much as the large owner; but it resorts to the State against its antagonists, as in the Middle Ages common men pitted themselves against the barons by siding with the king. The Liberal party is the party against "class privilege" because it represents no class advantages, but it is also the party that is on the whole most set against Collective control because it represents no established responsibility. It is constructive only so far as its antagonism to the great owner is more powerful than its jealousy of the State. It organises only because organisation is forced upon it by the organisation of its adversaries. It lapses in and out of alliance with Labour as it sways between hostility to wealth and hostility to public expenditure.

Every modern European State will have in some form or other these three parties: the resistent, militant, authoritative, dull, and unsympathetic party of establishment and success, the rich party; the confused, sentimental, spasmodic, numerous party of the small, struggling, various, undisciplined men, the poor man's party; and a third party, sometimes detaching itself from the second and sometimes reuniting with it, the party of the altogether expropriated masses, the proletarians, Labour. Change Conservative and Liberal to Republican and Democrat, for example, and you have the conditions in the United States. The Crown or a dethroned dynasty, the Established Church or a dispossessed Church, nationalist secessions, the personalities of party leaders, may break up, complicate, and confuse the self-expression of these three necessary divisions in the modern social drama, the analyst will make them out none the less for that. . . .

And then I came back as if I came back to a refrain; the ideas go on —as though we are all no more than little cells and corpuscles in some great brain beyond our understanding. . . .

So it was I sat and thought my problem out. . . . I still remember my satisfaction at seeing things plainly at last. It was like clouds dispersing to show the sky. Constructive ideas, of course, couldn't hold a party together alone, "interests and habits, not ideas," I had that now,

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and so the great constructive scheme of Socialism, invading and inspiring all parties, was necessarily claimed only by this collection of odds and ends, this residuum of disconnected and exceptional people. This was true, not only of the Socialist idea, but of the scientific idea, the idea of veracity —of human confidence in humanity—of all that mattered in human life outside the life of individuals. . . . The only real party that would ever profess Socialism was the Labour party, and that in the entirely one-sided form of an irresponsible and non-constructive attack on property. Socialism in that mutilated form, the teeth and claws without the eyes and brain, I wanted as little as I wanted anything in the world.

Perfectly clear it was, perfectly clear, and why hadn't I seen it before ? . . . I looked at my watch, and it was half-past two.

I yawned, stretched, got up and went to bed.

§ 9. My ideas about statecraft have passed through three main phases to the final convictions that remain. There was the first immediacy of my dream of ports and harbours and cities, railways, roads, and administered territories—the vision I had seen in the haze from that little church above Locarno. Slowly that had passed into a more elaborate legislative constructiveness, which had led to my uneasy association with the Baileys and the professedly constructive Young Liberals. To get that ordered life, I had realised the need of organisation, knowledge, expertness, a wide movement of co-ordinated methods. On the individual side I thought that a life of urgent industry, temperance, and close attention was indicated by my perception of these ends. I married Margaret and set to work. But something in my mind refused from the outset to accept these determinations as final. There was always a doubt lurking below, always a faint resentment, a protesting criticism, a feeling of vitally important omissions.

I arrived at last at the clear realisation that my political associates, and I in my association with them, were oddly narrow, priggish, and unreal, that the Socialists with whom we were attempting co-operation were preposterously irrelevant to their own theories, that my political life didn't in some way comprehend more than itself, that rather perplexingly I was missing the thing I was seeking. Britten's footnotes to Altiora's self-assertions, her fits of energetic planning, her quarrels and rallies and vanities, his illuminating attacks on Cramptonism and the heavy-spirited triviality of such Liberalism as the Children's Charter, served to point my way to my present conclusions. I had been trying to deal all along with human progress as something immediate in life, something to be immediately attacked by political parties and groups pointing primarily to that end. I now began to see that just as in my own being there was the rather shallow, rather vulgar, self-seeking careerist, who wore an admirable silk hat and bustled self-consciously through the lobby, and a much greater and indefinitely growing unpublished personality behind him—my hinterland, I have called it—so in human affairs generally the permanent reality is also a hinterland, which is never really immediate, which draws continually upon human experience and influences human action more and more, but which is itself never the actual player upon the stage. It is the unseen dramatist who never takes a call. Now it was just through the fact that our group about the Baileys didn't understand this, that with a sort

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of frantic energy they were trying to develop that sham expert officialdom of theirs to plan, regulate, and direct the affairs of humanity, that the perplexing note of silliness and shallowness that I had always felt and felt now most acutely under Britten's gibes, came in. They were neglecting human life altogether in social organisation.

In the development of intellectual modesty lies the growth of statesmanship. It has been the chronic mistake of statecraft and all organising spirits to attempt immediately to scheme and arrange and achieve. Priests, schools of thought, political schemers, leaders of men, have always slipped into the error of assuming that they can think out the whole—or at any rate completely think out definite parts—of the purpose and future of man, clearly and finally; they have set themselves to legislate and construct on that assumption, and, experiencing the perplexing obduracy and evasions of reality, they have taken to dogma, persecution, training, pruning, secretive education, and all the stupidities of self-sufficient energy. In the passion of their good intentions they have not hesitated to conceal fact, suppress thought, crush disturbing initiatives and apparently detrimental desires. And so it is blunderingly and wastefully, destroying with the making, that any extension of social organisation is at present achieved.

Directly, however, this idea of an emancipation from immediacy is grasped, directly the dominating importance of this critical, less personal, mental hinterland in the individual and of the collective mind in the race is understood, the whole problem of the statesman and his attitude towards politics gain a new significance, and become accessible to a new series of solutions. He wants no longer to "fix up," as people say, human affairs, but to devote his forces to the development of that needed intellectual life without which all his shallow attempts at fixing up are futile. He ceases to build on the sands, and sets himself to gather foundations.

You see, I began in my teens by wanting to plan and build cities and harbours for mankind; I ended in the middle thirties by desiring only to serve and increase a general process of thought, a process fearless, critical, real-spirited, that would in its own time give cities, harbours, air, happiness, everything at a scale and quality and in a light altogether beyond the match-striking imaginations of a contemporary mind. I wanted freedom of speech and suggestion, vigour of thought, and the cultivation of that impulse to veracity that lurks more or less discouraged in every man. With that I felt there must go an emotion. I hit upon a phrase that became at last something of a refrain in my speech and writings, to convey the spirit that I felt was at the very heart of real human progress—love and fine thinking.

(I suppose that nowadays no newspaper in England gets through a week without the repetition of that phrase.)

My convictions crystallised more and more definitely upon this. The more of love and fine thinking the better for men, I said; the less, the worse. And upon this fresh basis I set myself to examine what I as a politician might do. I perceived I was at last finding an adequate expression for all that was in me, for those forces that had rebelled at the crude presentations of Bromstead, at the secrecies and suppressions of my youth, at the dull unrealities of City Merchants, at the conventions and timidities of the Pinky Dinkys, at the philosophical recluse of Trinity and the phrases and tradition-worship of my political associates. None

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of these things were half alive, and I wanted life to be intensely alive and awake. I wanted thought like an edge of steel and desire like a flame. The real work before mankind now, I realised once and for all, is the enlargement of human expression, the release and intensification of human thought, the vivider utilisation of experience and the invigoration of research—and whatever one does in human affairs has or lacks value as it helps or hinders that.

With that I had got my problem clear, and the solution, so far as I was concerned, lay in finding out the point in the ostensible life of politics, at which I could most subserve these ends. I was still against the muddles of Bromstead, but I had hunted them down now to their essential form. The jerry-built slums, the roads that went nowhere, the tarred fences, litigious notice-boards and barbed wire fencing, the litter and the heaps of dump, were only the outward appearances whose ultimate realities were jerry-built conclusions, hasty purposes, aimless habits of thought, and imbecile bars and prohibitions in the thoughts and souls of men. How are we through politics to get at that confusion?

We want to invigorate and reinvigorate education. We want to create a sustained counter-effort to the perpetual tendency of all educational organisations towards classicalism, secondary issues, and the evasion of life.

We want to stimulate the expression of life through art and literature, and its exploration through research.

We want to make the best and finest thought accessible to every one, and more particularly to create and sustain an enormous free criticism, without which art, literature, and research alike degenerate into tradition or imposture.

Then all the other problems which are now so insoluble, destitution, disease, the difficulty of maintaining international peace, the scarcely faced possibility of making life generally and continually beautiful, become—*easy*. . . .

It was clear to me that the most vital activities in which I could engage would be those which most directly affected the Church, public habits of thought, education, organised research, literature, and the channels of general discussion. I had to ask myself how my position as Liberal member for Kinghamstead squared with and conduced to this essential work.

(*To be continued*)

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Histoire du Prince Alasi et de la Princesse Firouzka*

By William Beckford

NOTE

It was Beckford's intention before publishing *Vathek* to elaborate it by interpolating, in the fashion of the *Arabian Nights*, the stories of the three Princes who were in the Hall of Eblis when Vathek entered; but this scheme was perforce abandoned when the Rev. Samuel Henley without authorisation printed his English translation of the story and in his preface stated that it was based upon an Eastern tale. Beckford was compelled, as a counterblast to this audacious misstatement, to issue without delay the original, written by himself in French. Presumedly the "Episodes," as Beckford called them, were not then ready for the press; and, indeed, there is no allusion to them in print of their publication until 1815, when the (French) *Vathek* was published in London. "*J'ai préparé quelques Episodes*," Beckford wrote in the preface to that edition; "*ils sont indiqués, à la page* 200, *comme faisant suite à "Vathek"—peut-être paroîtront-ils un jour.*" On page 200 the titles of the "Episodes" are given:

Histoire du Prince Kalilah et de la Princesse Zulkaïs, enfermés dans le palais du feu souterrain.

Histoire de deux Princes amis, Alasi et Firouz, enfermés dans le palais du feu souterrain.

Histoire du Barkiarokh, enfermé dans le palais du feu souterrain.

Beckford never abandoned the intention of publishing the "Episodes," and, in the last decade of his long life, was willing to let Bentley have them, nay, eager that he should have them. However, he put such a high price on them that the negotiations fell through. When examining the Beckford papers at Hamilton Palace in search of material for my biography of Beckford, I found the manuscripts, which, by kind permission of the Duke of Hamilton, I am now enabled to print. The first of the three "Episodes" appeared in the December issue of The English Review, that now printed is the second.—Lewis Melville.

Je régnois en Kharesme, et je n'eusse pas échangé mon royaume, tout borné qu'il étoit, pour l'immense empire du calife Vathek;—non—ce n'est pas l'ambition qui m'a conduit dans ce funeste lieu. Ce cœur qui va

* This story, hitherto unpublished, is printed by arrangement with Mr. Lewis Melville. It is an exact copy, but for some very obvious and trifling blunders, of the manuscript.

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bientôt brûler du feu de la vengeance divine, étoit armé contre les passions violentes ; le louable, le calme sentiment de l'amitié pouvoit seul s'y faire entrée ;—l'amour, qui en auroit d'abord été repoussé, en prit la forme, et me perdit.

J'avois vingt ans lorsque le roi mon père mourut : je regrettai sincèrement sa perte, non seulement par un sentiment naturel, mais encore parceque je regardois la royauté comme un fardeau très lourd à porter.

Les molles délices du harem me charmèrent peu, l'idée des liens d'un mariage formel encore moins. Rondabah, princesse de Ghilan, pourtant m'avoit été solennellement promise et je ne pouvais rompre un accord que mon père avoit fait pour le bien des deux nations,—des délais étoient tout ce que j'osois me permettre.

Avec cet éloignement presque farouche pour les usages communément établis, il me fallut monter sur le trône, gouverner un peuple nombreux, supporter l'ineptie des grands et la sottise des petits, rendre justice à tous, et par conséquent vivre au milieu d'eux. Mais alors la générosité, la vertu n'étoient pas pour moi des noms vagues,—je remplissois exactement mes devoirs, quitte à m'en délasser de tems en tems en suivant mon penchant pour la solitude. Une tente, arrangée dans le genre persan, située au milieu d'une épaisse forêt, étoit le lieu ou j'allois passer ces momens de retraite qui me sembloient toujours trop rapidement s'écouler. J'avois fait abattre assez d'arbres pour former une petite plaine parsemée de fleurs, et qu'entouroit un canal dont les eaux étoient aussi claires que celles de Rocnabad. Dans ce lieu, qui ressembloit à la Lune quand elle brille en son plein dans l'azur foncé du firmament, j'admirois la sombre perspective des bois touffus qui m'environnoient, et où j'allois souvent rêver. Un jour qu'étendu sur la mousse, je caressois un jeune daim qui s'étoit apprivoisé avec moi, j'entendis le galop peu éloigné d'un cheval—et vis bientôt paroître un cavalier qui m'étoit inconnu ; son habillement étoit étrange, sa contenance féroce, et son œil hagard ; mais il ne fixa pas longtemps mon attention. Une figure angélique, sous l'habit d'un jeune garçon, attira tous mes regards. L'inconnu tenoit cet être, si gracieux, si délicat, étroitement serré contre son sein, et paroissoit vouloir l'empêcher de crier. Irrité de ce que je prenois pour une violence, je me lève, je coupe le chemin à l'étranger en faisant briller mon sabre à ses yeux, et lui crie : "Arrête, misérable ! Ose-tu commettre un tel attentat à la vue du roi de Kharesme ?" A peine avois-je prononcé ces mots, que celui à qui je les avois adressés se jette à terre, sans lâcher sa précieuse charge, et me saluant d'un air respectueux, me dit : "Prince Alasi, c'est vous que je cherche pour vous confier un dépôt dont rien n'égale le prix. Tilanshah, roi de Shirvan, l'ami intime du roi votre père, se trouve réduit aux dernières extrêmités. Ses sujets rebelles le tiennent assiegé dans sa citadelle de Samakhié. Les troupes du calife Vathek les soutiennent dans leur révolte ; ils ont juré la perte de leur souverain. Tilanshah souscrit courageusement au décret de la destinée pour ce que lui regarde lui-même, mais voulant, s'il est possible, sauver son fils unique, l'aimable enfant que vous voyez, il m'a ordonné de le remettre entre vos mains. Cachez cette perle incomparable dans votre sein ;—qu'on ignore la nacre où elle a été formée jusqu'à ce que la révolution des tems ramène un jour de sûreté. Adieu—je crains d'être poursuivi,—le prince Firouz vous fera savoir tous les détails que vous pourrez désirer."

J'avois pendant ce discours tendu les bras à Firouz ;—il s'y étoit pré-

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cipité ; nous nous tenions embrassés avec une tendresse qui parut combler de joie son conducteur, lequel remonta à cheval et s'éloigna de nous en un instant.

"Otez-moi d'ici," me dit alors Firouz ; "c'est à présent que je crains de tomber dans les mains de mes persécuteurs ;—quoi ! ils me sépareroient de l'ami que le ciel m'a choisi, et vers qui mon cœur tout entier s'élance ! "—"Non, aimable enfant," m'écriai-je, "rien ne pourra vous arracher d'auprès de moi ;—mes trésors, mes armées, tout sera employé pour votre conservation !—mais pourquoi cacher votre naissance dans mes états, où personne ne peut vous nuire ? "—"Si, il le faut, mon généreux défenseur," repondit Firouz, "les ennemis de mon père ont juré d'exterminer sa race ; ils ne craindront point la mort pour accomplir leur serment ; ils me poignarderont à vos yeux si je suis connu. Le mage, qui m'a conduit ici, et qui a pris soin de mon enfance, n'oubliera rien pour leur persuader que je n'existe plus. Supposez-moi un père—il n'importe qui ;—toute ma gloire sera de vous aimer, et de mériter d'être aimé de vous."

Tout en parlant ainsi nous arrivâmes à l'enclos de toiles peintes qui environnoit mon pavillon persan, où je fis servir des rafraîchissemens dont nous ne goutâmes guères ni l'un ni l'autre. Le son de voix, les discours, les regards de Firouz faisoient une impression sur mon cœur qui confondoit ma raison, et rendoit mes paroles rares et entrecoupées. Il s'aperçut du désordre de mon esprit, et pour le dissiper, il quitta l'air attendri et languissant, qu'il avoit eu jusqu'à lors, pour prendre la gaieté et la vivacité enfantine de son age ; car il ne paraissait pas avoir plus de treize ans.

"Hé quoi ! " me dit-il, "vous n'avez ici que des livres !—point d'instrumens de musique." Je souris, et fit apporter un luth. Firouz en joua en maître de l'art,—il chanta en s'accompagnant avec tant d'expression et tant de grâce, qu'il me jetta dans une nouvelle extase, dont il prit encore soin de me retirer par ses jeux innocens. La nuit qui survint nous sépara ; quoi qu'heureux au delà de ce que j'aurois cru pouvoir l'être, je l'avois desirée : je sentois le besoin de m'entretenir avec moi-même. Cela ne me fut pas facile d'abord, mes pensées etoient si confuses ! Je ne pouvois me rendre compte des agitations que j'avois éprouvées. "Enfin," dis-je, "le ciel a exaucé mes vœux les plus chers ; il m'envoie cet ami de cœur que je n'aurois jamais trouvé à ma cour ; il me l'envoie avec ces charmes de l'innocence qui émeuvent l'âme, et qui seront remplacés dans un âge plus mûr par les qualités qui rendent l'amitié le bien suprême de l'homme, et surtout d'un roi qui ne doit guère s'y attendre."

J'avois déjà plusieurs fois prolongé le tems qu'en général je destinois à ma solitude ; sa durée, si courte pour moi, paroissoit longue à mes peuples ; il falloit retourner a Lerbend. Quelques jours avant mon départ je fis venir un berger du voisinage, lui ordonnai d'avouer Firouz pour son fils, et lui enjoignit le secret sous peine de la vie. Cette précaution parut contenter celui qui en étoit l'objet, il redoubla d'attachement pour moi, et de soins pour me plaire.

L'amitié m'avoit pour ainsi dire apprivoisé ;—je ne fuyois plus les plaisirs et les divertissemens. Firouz s'y faisoit distinguer, admirer. Partageant la bonne opinion que les grâces, l'aménité du fils de Tilanshah avoient fait naître, je ne fus pas peu surpris de le voir m'aborder un jour d'un air furieux et égaré. "Roi de Kharesme," me dit-il, "pourquoi m'avez-vous trompé ? Si vous ne pouviez pas m'aimer uniquement, il ne

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falloit pas m'accepter pour ami. Renvoyez-moi chez mon mage puisque la princesse Rondabah, qu'on attend à tout heure ici, va s'emparer de tout votre cœur."

Cette étrange saillie me parut si déplacée que, prenant un ton sevère, je répondis: "Quelle extravagance est ceci, prince de Shirvan? Que vous importe mon union avec Rondabah? Qu'a de commun l'affection que je devrai a mon épouse avec celle que volontairement je me suis engagé d'avoir toute ma vie pour vous?"—"Oh! il m'importe beaucoup," repartit-il, "il m'importe beaucoup que vous ne trouviez pas un ami solide dans une femme aimable. Ne dit-on pas que la princesse de Ghilan réunit la fermeté d'âme, la valeur d'un homme, aux charmes de son sexe? Qu'aurez-vous donc à désirer avec elle? et que deviendrai-je alors? Vous croirez peut-être vous acquitter envers moi en me rétablissant dans mes états; mais je vous dis d'avance que si vous mettiez l'empire du monde à mes pieds en dédommagement de votre plus tendre amitié, je ne pourrois vous regarder que comme mon plus mortel ennemi."

Firouz me connoissoit mieux que je me connoissois moi-même; il m'éprouvait à plaisir; d'ailleurs il savoit se commander, s'inviter, s'animer, selon qu'il le jugeoit convenable. Il parut donc alors se calmer, et reprit son humeur enjouée. Quoique sous le nom d'un berger, le fils du roi de Shirvan avoit droit à tous mes égards,—et j'aimois mieux qu'on m'accusât d'une fantaisie ridicule que d'y manquer. Il occupoit le quartier le plus agréable de tout mon palais; il s'étoit lui-même choisi ses domestiques en addition à deux eunuques que le mage lui avoit envoyés dès les jour de son arrivée à mon pavillon persan. Je lui avois donné des maîtres pour l'instruire en toutes sortes de sciences, qu'il faisoit enrager; de superbes chevaux, qu'il tuoit; des esclaves, qu'il maltraitoit impitoyablement—mais on me cachoit tout cela: sa faveur sans bornes auprès de moi, dont on commençoit a murmurer, empêchoit qu'on ne l'accusât.

Un Moullah vénérable, et très considéré pour son savoir et sa piété, lui expliquoit la saine morale du Koran, lui en faisoit lire et apprendre par cœur les sacrés versets; et c'étoit ici ce qui déplaisoit le plus à mon jeune ami; mais j'attribuois cet éloignement à tout autre motif qu'à sa véritable cause. Je n'avois garde d'imaginer que son esprit avoit déjà imbibé des opinions les plus contraires à l'Islamisme.

Un jour que j'avois passé plusieurs heures sans voir mon aimable pupille, je fus le chercher et le trouvai, dans une grande salle, dansant autour d'une étrange figure affublée d'une peau d'âne, qu'il faisoit sauter avec lui: "Ah! mon cher prince," me dit-il, en courant à moi les bras ouverts, "voici la plus merveilleuse chose du monde! Mon Moullah est transformé en âne. C'est le roi des Anes, car il parle encore comme il parloit auparavant."—"Que voulez-vous dire?" m'écriai-je. "Qu'est-ce que ce jeu?"—"Ce n'est pas un jeu," me repondit le Moullah, en agitant deux oreilles postiches d'une grandeur demesurée, "je cherche par complaisance de paroître ce que je parois, et je supplie votre majesté de ne point le trouver mauvais."

A ces paroles je demeurai confondu;—je doutai si c'étoit la voix du Moullah que je venois d'entendre, et crut presque que c'étoit un veritable âne, qui, par quelque prestige, sembloit avoir parlé. J'avois beau demander à Firouz ce que tout cela signifioit—il me répondoit toujours, avec des ris immodérés: "Demandez-le à l'âne."

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Enfin ma patience étant à bout j'allois ordonner qu'on fît cesser par force cette dégoutante bouffonnerie, lorsque Firouz, prenant son air sérieux, me dit : " Sire, vous excuserez, je l'espère, l'innocent artifice dont je me suis servi pour vous prouver combien vos pareils en sont imposés par ceux qui les entourent. On vous a, sans doute, vanté ce Moullah comme un homme d'un mérite supérieur : comme tel vous l'avez donné pour maître à votre ami, votre pupille. Eh ! bien ! sachez que pour obtenir une de mes plus hideuses négresses—dont il est éperdument amoureux—il a consenti de rester trois jours sous ce ridicule costume, et d'être ainsi le jouet de tous ceux qu'il me plaira de faire rire à ses dépens. Au reste, convenez que la figure de l'âne est très bien imitée, et que la parole qu'il a ne nuit point à la représentation." Je demandai au Moullah si Firouz avoit dit la véritié. " Pas tout à fait," me répondit-il en bredouillant d'une manière piteusement ridicule ; " la fille qu'il doit me donner, quoique noire comme la nuit, est belle comme le jour ; l'huile qui vernit ses charmes sent la fleur d'orange, sa voix est aigre-douce comme la grenade ; quand elle se joue avec ma barbe, ses doigts, qui piquent comme le chardon, me chatouillent le cœur : oh ! laissez-moi l'acquérir, et vivre sous la forme d'un âne pendant trois jours."—" Meurs-y, misérable," m'écriai-je avec une indignation que je ne pus plus contenir, " et que je n'entende jamais parler de toi." Je me retirai en achevant ces mots, et en lançant à Firouz un regard auquel il n'étoit guères accoutumé.

Je passai le reste du jour à reflechir sur la méchanceté de Firouz, et sur l'infamie du Moullah ; mais quand le soir vint, je ne sentis plus que le besoin de revoir mon ami. Je le fis appeller. Il se présenta aussitôt d'un air affectueux et timide. " O mon cher prince," me dit-il, " vous ne savez pas combien j'ai été affligé de la colère où vous avez paru être contre moi ! J'ai fait au plus vite exécuter votre arrêt pour obtenir mon pardon ; l'âne est mort et enterré ; vous n'en entendrez plus parler."—" Voici une autre de vos mauvaises plaisanteries," dis-je. " Voulez-vous me faire accroire que le Moullah qui s'exprimoit avec tant de véhémence ce matin, est mort ce soir ? "—" Il l'est, ainsi que vous l'avez ordonné," repondit Firouz. " Un de mes esclaves nègres, dont il vouloit enlever la maîtresse, l'a dépêché, et on la mis en terre sans façon comme un âne qu'il étoit."—" Oh ! pour le coup," m'écriai-je, " c'en est trop ! Quoi ! vous croyez pouvoir impunément assassiner un homme à qui vous avez vous-même tourné la tête ! "—" J'ai exécuté vos ordres," reprit-il ; " je les ai pris à la lettre,—et assurément la perte d'un être si vil ne vaut pas vos regrets. Adieu ; je vais pleurer mon imprudence, et le peu de solidité de votre affection que le moindre petit événement m'enlève." Il alloit sortir,—je l'arrêtai ;—on nous servit sur des plateaux emaillés les mets les plus exquis ; nous nous mîmes a collationner et j'eus encore la foiblesse de rire de toutes les folies qu'il me dit sur son âne pendant le repas.

Le public ne prit pas si légèrement la mort du Moullah ;—on disoit que Firouz, en dérision de la foi des fidèles, avoit donné un breuvage à cet homme pieux, qui l'avoit fait devenir fol : on détestoit un acte si atroce,—on m'accusoit d'une foiblesse inexcusable pour un enfant à qui une vile naissance avoit donné de viles inclinations. La reine, ma mère, se crut obligée de m'apprendre ces murmures ;—elle m'en parla sans détour devant Firouz, pour dompter, s'il se pouvoit, son arrogance, et nous fit à tous deux des réprimandes sensées et affectueuses dont je sentis la justice, mais que mon

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ami ne lui pardonna jamais. Il étoit surtout outré du mépris que lui attiroit l'origine que nous lui avions supposée, et me dit qu'il falloit absolument déclarer qui il étoit. Je lui representai le danger de le faire dont il m'avait lui-même effrayé. Je le priai d'attendre que des émissaires que j'avois envoyés en Shirvan fussent revenus ; mais il n'en eu pas la patience, et imagina pour me satisfaire un moyen que je n'avois pu prévoir. Un matin que je devois aller à la chasse, le prince de Shirvan qui m'y accompagnoit toujours avec plaisir, fit semblant d'être malade ;—je voulois rester avec lui,—il me pressa de partir en m'assurant, qu'après un peu de repos, il seroit en état le soir de partager avec moi des amusemens qui me délasseroient de la fatigue du jour, et qu'il imagineroit lui-même.

En effet, je trouvai à mon retour une superbe collation, servie dans un petit bois de mon jardin qu'il avoit orné et illuminé de sa façon, c'est-à-dire, avec le goût le plus raffiné. Nous étions sous une sorte de daïs que formoient des branches entrelacées de grenadiers et de lauriers roses. Nous reposions nos pieds sur l'épais tapis d'un millier de fleurs effeuillées dont le parfum enivroit l'âme ;—des cases de cristal, sans nombre, remplis de fruits ambrés et flottant sur la neige réfléchissoient la lumière des cierges en miniature rangés à fleur d'eau sur les bords d'une série de fontaines ;—des chœurs de jeunes musiciens placés à une juste distance charmoient nos oreilles sans interrompre nos entretiens. Jamais soirée ne fut plus délicieuse,—jamais Firouz n'avoit été plus aimable, plus gai ;—ses agréables saillies m'animoient encore plus que le vin qu'il me versoit à grands flots.—Quand le rusé fils de Tilanshah s'apperçut que ma tête s'échauffoit, il mit un genoux en terre, et prenant mes deux mains dans les siennes :—"Mon cher Alasi," me dit-il, " j'avois oublié de vous demander la grâce d'un misérable qui a mérité la mort."—"Parle," lui repondis-je; " tu sais que tu peux tout obtenir de moi—d'ailleurs je me plairois à te trouver un cœur compatissant."

"Voici de quoi il est question," reprit Firouz. " J'étois aujourd'hui dans mon appartement, entouré de vos flatteurs qui me détestent et cherchent à me plaire, quand le berger, que vous m'avez supposé pour père, est venu à moi les bras ouverts pour m'embrasser. Dans ce moment le sang de Tilanshah s'est révolté dans mon cœur. "Retire-toi, rustre,' ai-je dit au berger ; ' va étouffer tes magots d'enfans avec tes lourdes caresses ; auroit-tu l'effronterie de soutenir que je suis ton fils ? '—' Vous savez bien que je le dois,' a-t-il répondu avec fermeté, ' et je le soutiendrai au péril de ma vie.'—Cette réponse étoit telle qu'elle devoit être, mais curieux de voir jusqu'à quel point nous pouvons compter sur ceux à qui nous confions nos secrets, j'ai ordonné qu'on donnât la bastonnade à cet homme en apparence si résolu ; il ne l'a pas soutenue longtems,—il a tout avoué ;—après votre défense expresse et vos menaces, il est digne de mort ; mais je vous supplie de lui pardonner."

" L'épreuve étoit un peu forte," dis-je ; " quoi ! tu seras toujours cruel ! Quel pouvoir irrésistible me force-t-il à t'aimer ? Ce n'est assurément pas la sympathie dans nos inclinations ! "—" Il est vrai," répliqua-t-il, " que je n'ai pas autant de patience que vous avec les hommes. Je les trouve carnassiers comme des loups et faux comme les renards dans les fables de Loqman,—si volages dans leur sentimens, si fragiles dans leur promesses, qu'il m'est impossible de ne les pas tenir en abhorrence !—que ne sommes nous tous les deux seuls au monde !—la terre alors, au lieu d'habitans perfides

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et misérables, pourroit se vanter de porter deux amis fidèles et heureux ! " Ce fut par ces élans d'enthousiasme exaltés et romantiques que Firouz me fit tolérer cette nouvelle preuve de la méchanceté de son cœur. Je sus dès le lendemain qu'il ne m'avoit pas tout dit, que c'étoit lui qui avoit fait venir le berger, à qui, par ses ordres, on avoit insinué de l'aborder comme il l'avoit fait. J'appris que le pauvre rustique avoit eu le courage de se laisser frapper presque jusqu'à la mort avant que d'enfreindre mon commandement ;—j'envoyai une somme d'argent à ce malheureux, et ne fis de reproches qu'à moi-même de son état.

Comme cette scène avoit indigné tout Zerbend, et qu'on en jugeoit de manière à faire encore plus de tort à Firouz qu'il ne méritoit, je déclarai solennellement sa naissance et les raisons qu'on avoit eu de la cacher. Je ne manquai ensuite de l'environner d'une pompe royale, et ne fus pas peu surpris de voir que ceux qui avoient paru les plus acharnés contre lui, briguoient avec empressement l'honneur de le servir. J'entrai là-dessus en quelque défiance sur leurs intentions : mais le prince de Shirvan me rassura. " Ne prenez point de fausses alarmes," me dit-il en riant " ; vous pouvez confier la garde de ma personne à ces gens-ci aussi bien qu'à d'autres, il n'y a point de trahison dans leur fait : ils ont seulement changé de cœur quand j'ai changé de naissance. A présent, je ne suis plus ce petit berger malin et cruel qui par ses espièglerie ne pouvoit manquer de se faire renvoyer dans sa cabane. Je suis un grand prince, bon, humain, dont on peut attendre mille bienfaits. Je parie que je pouvais faire couper la tête à cinq ou six d'entre eux pour en jouer à la boule, et que les autres continueroient à chanter mes louanges en se flattant d'être plus fortunés que leurs compagnons."

De semblables discours, dont je ne connoissois que trop la solidité, endurcissoient insensiblement mon cœur. C'est un grand mal d'examiner les hommes d'un œil trop clairvoyant ; on croit vivre avec des bêtes féroces, et on le devient soi-même.

Je craignis d'abord que dans le rang où se trouvoit le prince de Shirvan, il ne se livrât encore plus librement à ses inclinations perverses, mais je me trompai ; sa conduite fut noble, sensée, ses manières obligeantes envers grands et petits ; enfin il éffaça entièrement les mauvaises impressions qu'il avoit données de lui. Ces jours de calme durèrent jusqu'à l'arrivée de Rondabah. J'étois dans l'appartement de Firouz losqu'on vint m'annoncer que cette princesse, avec une escorte digne d'elle, n'étoit plus qu'à quelques parasanges de Zerbend. Interdit à cette nouvelle, sans savoir pourquoi, je tournai mes regards sur mon ami. Je tremble encore au souvenir de l'état où je le vis ! Une pâleur mortelle couvroit son visage ;—bientôt il fut saisi de mouvemens convulsifs, et enfin il tomba par terre privé de sentiment. J'allois le porter moi-même sur son lit, quand les deux eunuques, que le mage lui avoit envoyés, me l'enlèverent, en me disant: " Laissez-le à nos soins, seigneur, et daignez-vous retirer ;—si en rouvrant les yeux il vous voyoit auprès de lui, il mourroit à l'instant."

Ces paroles—le ton avec lequel elles furent prononcées—me saisiront au point qu'à peine je pus me traîner jusqu'en dehors des portières ;—là, rempli d'angoisses inexprimables, j'attendois le dénouement de la scène—lorsqu'enfin un des eunuques vint me prier de rentrer. Firouz, appuyé sur les bras de l'autre eunuque, tâchoit, d'un pas chancelent, de venir à ma rencontre. Je l'obligeai de s'asseoir sur le divan, et m'étant mis auprès de

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lui :—"Ami de mon âme," lui dis-je, "les sentimens étranges de nos cœurs sont la faute de la destinée. Vous êtes, contre toute raison, toute compréhensibilité, jaloux de Rondabah, et moi—malgré ma foi que mes ambassadeurs lui ont donnée—je suis prêt à tout risquer plutôt que de vous plonger dans une mer de peines."—"Allons voir cette héroïne redoutable," me répondit Firouz; "permettez que je vous suive dans cette première visite—à mon age on ne signifie rien—si vous me laissez ici, j'y mourrai d'inquiétude avant votre retour."—Je n'avois rien à répliquer à cela ;—je ne pouvois que consentir à tout ce que désiroit l'objet d'une prédilection inexplicable, que ma complaisance ranima, et qui me disoit pendant tout le chemin : "Ah ! je voudrois bien que cette maudite princesse de Ghilan ne fut pas belle." Elle l'étoit pourtant, mais d'une beauté qui inspiroit plutôt le respect que les désirs,—sa taille étoit fort haute, son port majestueux, son air fier et sévère. Les boucles de ses cheveux d'un noir d'ébène relevoient la blancheur de son teint,—et de ses yeux de la même couleur partoient des regards plus capables d'en imposer que de séduire. Sa bouche, quoique gracieusement formée, ne connoissoit pas le doux sourire, ses lèvres de corail s'ouvroient pour proférer des paroles toujours sensées, mais rarement insinuantes.

Piquée de mon peu d'empressement, et offensée de ce que, contre l'usage, je m'étois fait accompagner par mon ami, Rondabah ne nous eut pas plutôt aperçus que, se tournant vers la reine ma mère :—"Quel est," dit-elle, "celui de ces deux princes à qui je suis destinée ! "—"A tous les deux, s'il vous plait," répondit précipitamment Firouz d'un air moqueur qui manqua me faire éclater de rire. Je me retins avec peine, et je préparois quelqu'excuse à l'étourderie de mon ami, quand la princesse de Ghilan, après m'avoir regardé attentivement de la tête aux pieds, et jetté un coup d'œil dédaigneux sur Firouz, dit en s'adressant toujours à la reine: "On mérite l'insulte quand on la souffre. Adieu, madame. Et vous, Kali," continua-t-elle en se tournant vers le chef de ses eunuques," préparez tout pour retourner dès cette nuit en Ghilan." En disant ces mots, elle sortit, et la reine ne tarda pas à la suivre ;—elle ne se donna que le tems de nous menacer de tous les maux où pouvoit nous plonger la guerre que nous venions de nous attirer en offensant Rondabah ; mais nous n'étions pas dans ce moment d'humeur à nous alarmer. Nous ne fûmes pas plutôt seuls que nous rîmes à l'envie, l'un et l'autre, de la scène qui venoit de se passer. "Est-ce bien une femme que nous venons de voir ? " disoit Firouz. "Non, c'est le spectre de Roostum ou de Lalzer ;—l'âme de ces fameux guerriers, ancêtres de Rondabah, s'est du moins emparée de la longue figure qu'on nous donne pour elle. O mon cher Alasi, polissez votre sabre, préparez-vous à défendre vos jours, si vous n'observez pas exactement toutes les formalités que vous dictera l'important Kali avec sa voix argentine."

Nous nous entretînmes sur ce ton jusqu'à ce que la reine vint nous interrompre : elle avoit presque appaisé Rondabah et venoit me persuader d'achever son ouvrage. Ses représentations, dictées par l'amour maternel, furent vives et pressantes. Je m'y rendis.

Le jour qui précéda celui qu'on avoit fixé pour la solennité nuptiale, je me levai plus matin qu'à l'ordinaire. Inquiet, agité, je descendis seul dans le vaste jardin qui renfermoit les chapelles sépulcrales de mes ancêtres. Tout en me promenant dans les allées les plus sombres, j'entrai enfin dans une grotte qui recéloit une mine d'eau, et où l'on entrevoyoit à peine

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un foible rayon de lumière. Je m'y plaçai dans le recoin le plus obscur pour rêver à mon aise. Bientôt après je vis venir une figure dont l'habillement et les traits ressembloient à ceux d'Amru, le fils de mon vizir ;—il alla s'asseoir à l'endroit de la grotte où un peu de clarté donnoit, et l'empêchoit de m'apercevoir. Je ne lui dis mot, mais ne fut pas peu étonné de voir un autre personnage mystérieux, qui me paroissoit être le chef des eunuques de Rondabah, sortir comme du sein des ténèbres. Cette figure aborda l'autre, et il me sembla l'entendre dire : " Fils d'Ilbars, charmant Amru, que votre cœur se réjouisse—il aura ce qu'il désire ;—Rondabah, ma maîtresse, se rendra ici, cette nuit. Vous y recevrez ses premiers sermens ; le roi de Kharesme n'aura demain que les seconds." Amru baisa la terre en signe de soumission et murmura quelques paroles à voix basse, que le résonnement des eaux rendit inintelligible ;—ils sortirent tous deux.

Je fus sur le point de les suivre, et de laver dans leur sang l'affront qui m'étoit fait ; mais un moment de réflection arrêta ce premier mouvement. Je n'avois point d'amour pour Rondabah,—je ne l'épousois que pour des raisons d'état, et par pitié pour elle. Il n'étoit plus question de me rendre malheureux pour de tels motifs,—je n'avois qu'à faire éclater le crime de la perfide princesse, j'étois débarrassé d'elle, et je recouvrois avec honneur ma liberté. Toutes ces pensées se succédèrent rapidement dans mon esprit ; je bénis mon étoile qui avoit amené à tems cette importante découverte, et je courus en faire part à Firouz. Que devins-je en entrant dans son appartement ! Je le trouve entre les bras de ses deux eunuques favoris, qui retenoient ses mains par force en pleurant et criant : " O notre cher maître, que vous avoient fait vos belles tresses de cheveux ? Pourquoi les avez-vous impitoyablement coupées ? et vous voudriez encore cicatriser votre front d'ivoire ! mais nous mourrons plutôt que de le permettre." A cette vue je n'eus pas la force de proferer un seul mot ; ma douleur muette parut faire revenir mon ami à lui-même ; il s'arracha à ses eunuques, et courant à moi les bras ouverts :—" Calmez-vous, généreux Alasi," me dit-il en m'embrassant, " si c'est l'état où vous me voyez qui vous afflige, vous deviez vous y attendre ;—n'en soyez pas témoin ! Malgré ces larmes que je répands, ces cheveux que j'ai brulés, et tout le désespoir qui m'agitoit, je souhaite que vous soyez heureux avec Rondabah, qu'importe s'il m'en coûte la vie ! "—" Ah ! " m'ecriai-je, " que mille Rondabahs eussent péri pour épargner a vos nerfs trop mobiles la fièvre qui les dévore, quand même elles eussent été toutes aussi fidèles que la nôtre est perfide ! "—" Quoi ! " s'écria Firouz, à son tour, " ai-je bien entendu ? Seroit-ce de la princesse de Ghilan que vous parlez ? De grâce expliquez-vous ! " Alors je lui contai ce qui s'étoit passé dans la grotte, et la résolution où j'étois de rendre publique l'infamie de Rondabah. Il approuva beaucoup mon projet, et ne me cacha pas la joie que lui causoit cet événement, dont il me félicitoit, en ajoutant à voix basse: "Il m'en a coûté mes cheveux, mais vous l'avez échappé belle."

Nous résolûmes de ne pas révéler notre secret à la reine ma mère avant l'heure où nous voulions la mener avec nous pour surprendre Rondabah.

La reine parut plus surprise qu'affligée, quand nous lui dîmes ce qui nous amenoit si tard chez elle ;—l'amitié qu'elle avoit d'abord témoignée à Rondabah s'étoit refroidie à mesure que je paroissois m'attacher à cette princesse ; cependant, comme elle n'avoit pu s'empêcher de l'estimer, elle

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ne se lassoit pas, en nous suivant, de faire des exclamations sur cette aventure dont Firouz rioit par plus d'une raison.

Nous descendîmes dans le jardin : un esclave fidèle, que j'avois placé en embuscade, vint nous dire que les coupables étoient dans la grotte depuis quelques momens. Aussitôt nous y entrâmes avec des flambeaux, et assez de monde pour faire mourir de honte ceux que nous surprenions ainsi : mais ils ne se déconcertèrent nullement. Je tire mon sabre avec fureur,—je crois d'un seul coup faire tomber par terre la tête des deux misérables, mais je ne frappe que l'air ; ils disparoissent à nos yeux.

Dans ce moment de confusion, on crie : "La princesse de Ghilan a forcé la garde qui défendoit l'entrée de la grotte !" Et nous la voyons reparoître. "Roi de Kharesme," me dit-elle d'un ton modeste mais assuré, "on m'a avertie qu'il s'ourdissoit ici une trame contre mon honneur, et je suis venue confondre mes ennemis. De quoi s'agit-il ?"—"Fuis, malheureuse," s'écria la reine, "ou mon fils va redoubler le coup que ta magie a fait manquer !"—"Je ne crains pas la mort," répondit Rondabah sans se déconcerter. "Alasi n'a jamais attenté à ma vie. Si quelque prestige vous jette tous dans l'erreur, apprenez-moi de quelle nature il est. Je compte assez sur le secours que le ciel accorde à l'innocence pour me flatter de vous désabuser."

L'air noble et fier de Rondabah, ses regards imposans me confondoient ; je doutois presque de ce que j'avois vu et entendu, quand Firouz s'écria : "Oh ! il faut avouer que la princesse de Ghilan est de bien courte mémoire. Nous la trouvons ici dans les bras de son cher Amru,—elle disparoît avec son favori, et quand, dans l'instant même, il lui plaît de revenir sur la scène, elle a tout oublié."

A ces paroles, Rondabah changea de couleur ; son teint animé devint d'une pâleur mortelle,—elle tourna sur moi des yeux remplis de larmes. "O prince infortuné !" me dit-elle, "je vois à present toute la profondeur de l'abîme qui est entr'ouvert sous tes pas ! Le monstre qui t'y entraîne ne manquera pas sa proie. C'est lui qui a les esprits des ténèbres à ses ordres ;—je ne puis te sauver, et ne saurois sans frémir t'abandonner à ton sort ! Tu me couvres d'infamie, et ta perte est la seule angoisse de mon cœur." Après avoir parlé ainsi, Rondabah se retira d'un pas majestueux, sans que personne osât s'y opposer. Nous restâmes comme pétrifiés à nous regarder fixement les uns les autres sans pouvoir ouvrir la bouche. "Que nous sommes insensés," s'écria enfin la reine; "quoi ! la hardiesse d'une indigne magicienne, nous feroit-elle démentir nos yeux et nos oreilles ! Qu'elle parte !—qu'elle nous délivre à jamais de son odieuse présence,—c'est le mieux qui puisse nous arriver !" J'en convins, et Firouz qui paroissoit confus et alarmé ne fut assurément pas d'un autre avis. Nous reprîmes chacun le chemin de nos appartemens ;—j'étois dans une si grande confusion de pensées que je ne m'aperçus point que Firouz suivoit mes pas. Je ne pus me défendre d'un mouvement d'horreur en me voyant seul avec lui. Pressentimens que le ciel nous envoie, vous êtes sans effet sur les cœurs corrompus !

Firouz se jette impétueusement à mes genoux ; et me dit en sanglottant : "O pourquoi, roi de Kharesme, m'avez-vous donné un asile ? Que ne me laissiez-vous périr avec Filanshah ? J'étois un enfant alors, personne n'auroit pu dire que j'étois magicien. C'est donc dans votre cour, à vos côtés, que j'ai appris à conjurer les Dives ! Rondabah, la méchante

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Rondabah, vous l'a presque persuadé ; ne dira-t-elle pas aussi que j'ai employé quelque charme pour acquérir votre amitié ? Hélas ! vous savez bien que toute la magie dont je me suis servi à cette fin n'a été que de vous chérir moi-même cent fois plus que ma vie."

Mais pourquoi appuyer sur une scène dont vous prévoyez tous le dénouement ? Comme le calife Vathek j'avois entendu la voix d'un bienfaisant génie, et comme lui j'endurcis mon cœur contre son impulsion salutaire ; les paroles de Rondabah furent oubliées—j'écartai le doute confus qu'elles m'avoient donné. Le prince de Shirvan me devint plus cher que jamais. Ce moment fut la crise qui détermina ma perte.

Nous apprîmes le lendemain que Rondabah étoit partie dans la nuit avec toute sa suite, et j'en fis faire des réjouissances publiques. Quelques jours après, Firouz me dit devant la reine ma mère: "Vous voyez bien, roi de Kharesme, que vous allez avoir la guerre contre le roi de Ghilan ; il voudra venger sa fille qui ne manquera pas d'artifices pour le persuader de son innocence : prévenez-le ; levez une armée,—entrons dans le Ghilan,—ravageons-le,—c'est vous qui êtes outragé." La reine fut de l'avis de Firouz, et j'y souscrivis. Cependant je voyois à regret faire les préparatifs de cette guerre,—je la croyois juste, et pourtant j'en étois troublé comme si elle ne l'avoit point été;—d'ailleurs, les alarmes que j'avois plus d'une foi prises sur mon extrême attachement pour Firouz redoubloient de force de jour en jour. Le fils de Filanshah avoit trop bien appris à lire dans mon cœur pour ajouter foi aux prétextes que je donnois à mes agitations involontaires, mais il faisoit semblant de me croire, et en prenoit l'occasion de chercher sans cesse quelques nouveaux moyens de me distraire.

Un matin que nous allions partir pour une grande chasse, nous trouvâmes dans la cour de mon palais un homme, chargé d'une pesante caisse, qui se disputoit avec mes gardes. Je voulois savoir de quoi il étoit question. "C'est un joaillier de Moussoul," me répondit le chef de mes eunuques; "il prétend avoir les bijoux les plus rares, mais il est si importun qu'il ne veut pas attendre le loisir de votre majesté."—"Il a raison," dit Firouz; "tout ce qui peu plaire ou amuser vient toujours à propos ; rentrons pour examiner les merveilles qu'on nous annonce ;—les bêtes fauves nous attendrons du reste pour elles-même.

(*To be continued*)

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"Nauticus"

"The time is not ripe for universal brotherhood, and the one-sided cosmopolitanism which once upon a time struck root among the idealistic Germans has *fortunately* given place to a healthy sense of nationality. A pushing, strong nation conscious of its power cannot accept the idea of absolute general arbitration (*Schiedsgerichtsarbeit*). . . . To-day among all parties who do not see their justification in the negation of the existing order of society, opinion is one and uniting, namely, that the safeguarding of what has been won depends upon the maintenance of such a defensive power (*Wehrmacht*) as may cause even the strongest disturber of peace to regard attack as a dangerous experiment."

These words, quoted from the German semi-official publication "Nauticus," are by far the most important internationally written or uttered during the past month. As the deliberate expression of the German race of sixty-five million people, they define at once a policy and a philosophy—of State reason and progression—to which no man, here or elsewhere, can take exception. They reflect the purpose of the most vital nation in Europe, conscious of a mighty destiny. Free from all spirit of aggression, they enunciate as the determining instance of policy, progress; as the determining factor of realisation, force; as the guiding principle of existence, scientific, unalterable design. To be noted is the word "fortunately," which here, for the sake of emphasis, is placed in italics. Fortunately, "Nauticus" observes, "a healthy sense of nationality" has arisen in Germany. And again, the use of the words "defensive power" is noticeable—an arm this which obviously can only refer to the German Navy, as the potential "disturber of peace" can only refer to Great Britain.

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"NAUTICUS"

In this temperate language "Nauticus" sums up the national policy of Germans, buoyant with scientific purpose, while we—*spretæ formæ*—are labouring with the purely insular question of woman's suffrage, and Parliament solemnly records a majority for enfranchising certain spinster ladies of England. It is not to the purpose to discuss that local matter here, to take side either for or against it. The concern of this country, and so of Europe, is not in the slightest what attitude we may adopt towards the enfranchisement of women, but this: what policy is this country going to pursue in face of the rapid growth of the German Navy. Had we, like the Germans, a national programme of defence fixed by law, regulated automatically by exigency, and governed by a State design unfettered by party or faction, the question of the Navy, of how many ships it is essential for England to build to assure her safety and policy and continuity, would not be brought into the arena of discussion. Unfortunately this is not the case. The recent Naval debate in the House of Commons shows only too clearly how necessary to the control of Parliamentarians is the voice of the outside public, how vital to the hugger-mugger of professional politics the compelling independence of the layman has become. While Mr. Dillon is urging upon the House the monstrosity of our forty-million Naval Budget, and Miss Pankhurst is endeavouring to cozen or cajole the country to the idea of woman's suffrage—we who have not even universal male suffrage—it is well to see what "Nauticus," on behalf of the German Empire, says as to the use and purpose of the German Fleet.

We remember the abortive attempt of Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman to effect a reduction in the German naval arm, how his ingenuous overtures caused the immediate mobilisation of the German Navy, how they actually accelerated the construction of battleships and stirred up a war scare in the whole Fatherland. We tried again, as Mr. Asquith informed the House the other day, and we were informed that any attempt to force Germany into a discussion of a matter which the German Government regarded as a purely national concern, would be

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viewed by the whole country as an unfriendly act. The effect of that reply has been instructive. It has compelled the believers in universal brotherhood to change their outlook. It has forced the present Government to divorce itself from the "Little Navy" faction. It is the direct reason of the present forty-million budget. And this is what "Nauticus" says is the lesson of the decade 1900–1910: "Out of the political events of the last ten years the wise dictum of Karl Haase has proved itself to be the right one: 'Arms decide things in the world, not the superiority of education. Nations are maintained by their fitness for fighting, by their sense of unity'" (*Sinneseinheit*). And "Nauticus" adds: "All vital nations, therefore, are filled with a powerful endeavour to create a military force commensurate with their position and economic interests, without which a strong policy cannot be carried through."

"NAUTICUS" refers to the sixty-six years of war waged by England during 1688–1815 for purposes of material advantage and aggrandisement, and to the fact that in the last decade it has come to be recognised even by Englishmen that the absolute supremacy of England, political and economic, is no longer tenable in the world and will never again be so. England will have to accept the new political and economic conditions. The German Navy has begun to secure for Germany the purpose of her military arm—the maintenance of the world's peace. He goes on to say that Germany has every reason to be satisfied with the first beginnings. The sacrifices entailed by the construction of the fleet have been heavy, but they have been cheerfully borne and will be cheerfully borne! The Navy has been placed in the saddle; it is there, still in process of growth, but the achievement points to its "purposeful, successful development. The patriotism of the German people, their perfectly well-understood interest in the strengthening of German sea-power, will contribute to the completion within the next decade of the work so happily begun."

"THE completion within the next decade of the work so happily begun"? We have seen the jubilant note sounded by

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this temperate writer, careful of his words (if not of his metaphor), laying down in the year 1910 as axiomatic of German policy the condition of force, of force unifying and energising the whole people; refuting all idea of disarmament or the reduction of armaments; sanctifying the conception of untiring military endeavour, military preparedness, military arbitrament; conscious, proud, restless, claiming for the German nation the right to find the national expression, to fulfil what Fichte called the natural destiny of the race. And (as he writes) to this end have contributed the great patriotic organisations, the splendid patriotism of Germans, the Spartan enthusiasm for the Navy shared by the women of Germany, and the new education of the young. He must be a poor fellow who will not give honour to this fine success achieved by Germany, to the undaunted spirit which in these last ten years has changed the Philistinism characteristic of the former generation to such purposeful design and comprehension: which "will contribute to the completion within the next decade of the work so happily begun."

This work, so happily begun—let Mr. Dillon striving after national dismembership, let the women of England hankering after a vote that neither soldier nor sailor possesses, take note—this work is none other than the completion of a Navy strong enough at some date within the next decade successfully to dispute our supremacy of the seas. Germany has every right to build this Navy, as she has every right to build ships as secretly and swiftly as she can. It is her *Reichs-politik*, entirely her own affair, nor would it trouble us in the least were it not directed primarily and determinately at this country. That is the question, and it is the question which confronts all English statesmen and politicians to-day, regardless of party or sex. It is not easy to plead dispassionately this cause. What with our party system, the individualism of the "crank" and the professionalism of the party scaremonger, our natural insularity which keeps us out of touch with the Continent, and that strange inertia of imagination which inclines the most dare-devil people

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in Europe to question and procrastinate, we are apt to miss the essential which, in this matter, is not the case of hostility or of war, not an immediate problem of politics or diplomacy, not really a problem at all, but simply an affair of naval construction which, if it is properly understood and tackled now, should dispose for a century of any cause for alarm, yet, if neglected and not grappled with must inevitably bring about the most serious crisis which has ever befallen these islands since the days of the Norman Conquest. Look at it from whatever angle one may, religious, military, scientific, humanitarian, we cannot dispute the facts which the Prime Minister of England, a staunch Liberal, a man who, it is known, would associate himself gladly with any international movement for the reduction of armaments, laid before the House of Commons on July 14—ominous as the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. At the end of 1911, Mr. Asquith said, Great Britain will have sixteen, and Germany will have eleven "Dreadnought" battleships. At the end of 1912, but "certainly in the spring of 1913," England will have twenty-five "Dreadnoughts," Germany will have twenty-one. And to this "strict, actual account as between Germany and ourselves," the two Colonial "Dreadnoughts" can be added, and on the other side, the four Italian "Dreadnoughts" that are to be and the somewhat mysterious Austrian ships. Let us see what it looks like in a table:

	Dreadnoughts		
	British.	German.	Margin.
At end of 1911 . . .	16	11	5
At spring of 1913 . .	25	21	4

Now the two Colonial "Dreadnoughts" are not likely to be employed in European waters, whereas all the Italian, all the Austrian "Dreadnoughts" will be. To this margin the security of Great Britain and with her of the Empire has sunk. To the two-Power standard there is no longer even reference. The very word has been abandoned. It is now, on the deliberate showing of England's Prime Minister, no longer a question

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of what our superiority in ships is—a superiority upon which the life's blood of all of us depends—but whether the small margin actually existing may be said, from the military point of view, to constitute a superiority at all, taking into account the vast dependencies, coaling-stations, colonies, &c., we, in time of war, will have to protect (whereas Germany would concentrate her entire fighting force upon the object of attack); the accidents of war, immensely increased by the narrow waters in which such a hard fight would take place, the danger of mines, submarines, torpedoes; and the political contingencies that may arise, that invariably do arise on the eve of epochal events, which might necessitate the employment of most of the ships of the pre-"Dreadnought" era in remote waters. And the point to be noted is that Mr. Asquith admittedly took the sanguine view of the situation. He practically discounted the Austrian ships. He expressed the hope that at the end of 1912, the last year in which under the German Navy Law four "Dreadnoughts" are to be laid down yearly, the rate of German construction would drop from four to two. He gave Germany the benefit of the doubt generally, with regard to the rapidity of her ship construction. And he admitted that the German Government had declined to discuss the matter of the reduction of armaments on the ground that public opinion in that country would not consent to any modification of the existing programme.

So that, taking the most optimistic view of things, England *plus* the Colonial ships will have twenty-seven "Dreadnoughts" at the spring of 1913, Germany will have twenty-one, *plus* the four Italian and the admittedly two Austrian, or twenty-seven in all, the sole margin depending upon the value of our preponderance in ships of the pre-"Dreadnought" era based on the supposition that they will not have to be employed elsewhere. We need not fall into a state of alarm at this revelation, for it is a revelation to most of us; indeed the main thing is not to get alarmed but to view the problem with virile sanity. But it is impossible to ignore it. The whole thing has come about

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entirely as those who knew the German national character predicted, and were accused as scaremongers, that it would come, swiftly, almost secretly, bursting upon us one day with the unexpectedness of disaster. It started with the launch of the *Dreadnought* ship in this country, an event which, rendering obsolescent all previously constructed ships, opened the way to Germany to enter upon a fair and open race of naval construction. We laughed. We smiled at the German vote of building, oblivious of the fact that the two methods of comparison are entirely different—a simple fact, which till recently deceived even our Government—and now we are informed that the two-Power standard has gone, that the actual margin of safety will, within a couple of years, be turned into the fortuity of a fighting chance which is the "great condition" aimed at by the restless ambition of German Hohenzollern policy. Let us doff our hats to Admiral Tirpitz, who has pushed this thing through. The dream of Frederick List, father of Pan-Germanism, of Lassalle, of Robertus, above all, of Treitschke—(1) to emancipate Prussia from England; (2) to build and ultimately to obtain a fleet strong enough to enforce German rights upon the seas if ever England disputed the way—is approaching tangible realisation. The *raison d'être* of the German Navy is vindicated. We are face to face with the hazard of the "great condition," with the day that governs destiny.

THERE are various ways of looking at the matter and, no doubt, the habit of estimating values by the comparative number of a certain class of ships is, to some extent, misleading. We need not depreciate the uses of the vessels of the pre-"Dreadnought" era. The personal "moment," as Germans say, is unquestionably of the highest importance. It is difficult to believe that the English sailor is not a finer seaman than the German, who has no naval traditions and, as a fact, is often a landsman, as it is difficult to believe that the German naval genius can possibly be superior to our own. But reliance on the pre-"Dreadnought" ships is not sufficient; nor is it wise to

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assume, in these scientific days when it takes a sailor, roughly, six years to know his ship, that the old sea-dog spirit of Britons will outweigh that of the Teuton longshoreman who is an electrical mechanic by instinct. It is true that we defeated the Armada, but it was the providence of the wind and the waves that consummated the victory. We will do better to recall our own unpreparedness at the outbreak of the Boer War in the teeth of warning and menace and to remember what our neglect, our insular self-complacency, our lack of military prescience and decision ultimately cost us. We have the lesson of pigmy Japan *versus* the colossus Russia. True, David slew the giant. Strength is not everything, but the stake at issue is our all. The man who sees the figures of Mr. Asquith and can say with his hand upon his heart that all is well must have strange notions of the art of *Kriegspiel*, which is the game we and Germany are now playing at, as did Japan and Russia before us.

A WORD may be said as to the rapidity of German ship construction, which, though a simple matter, has given rise to all kinds of explanations and mystification in the minds of the laymen and of the Government. The explanation is that in Germany the rate is reckoned from the date of the announcement in the estimates (*Etatsrechlich*), whereas we reckon from the actual date of the order of the hull. This obviously leads to a considerable amount of mystery in both methods, for the *preparatory* work does not figure in the English account, whereas the actual technical rate of work does not appear in the German. Thus our much-vaunted rate of construction of the "Dreadnought" in twenty-four months does not include the number of months spent in preparatory work of design, of armament, &c., so that the public, eagerly comparing our rate of construction with that of the German "Dreadnought" (considerably over thirty months) complacently assumes that we can build such a vessel in about a third of the time quicker than the Germans can—which is an entirely erroneous calculation. And that admirable person, "Nauticus," draws up a table of the speed of construction, which is worth our attention.

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England		Germany	
Speed of construction in months.		Speed of construction in months.	
Bellerophon	35	*Nassau*	42
Superb	38	*Westfalen*	44
St. Vincent	36	*Rheinland*	37
Vanguard	35	*Posen*	38
Invincible	48	*Scharnhorst*	31
Indomitable	39	*Blucher*	41
Inflexible	43	*V. der Tann*	41

The table is instructive for it shows the rapid progress made by Germany in the construction of "Dreadnoughts" and particularly the speed of construction of the *Scharnhorst* (in thirty-one months) is interesting. No greater mistake can be made than to suppose that Germany's capacity for the building of "Dreadnoughts" is limited, for Germany has eight yards which can turn out "Dreadnoughts," and she is rapidly increasing their number. This, too, is a matter of which the present Government are fully aware. Mr. Asquith's admission of the German building capacity disposes once and for all of the fallacious estimates entertained by many people in this country as to the building capacity of German yards. There is the question of expenditure and here again "Nauticus" proves instructive.

Comparative Naval Expenditure, 1900–1910

	England.	Germany.
1900	£30,598,000	£7,868,000
1910	£41,415,000	£21,702,000
Increase	35 per cent.	275 per cent.

It is grotesque; it is horrible, but nevertheless there it is and the fact remains that the German rate of expenditure on the Navy—on the "work happily begun"—has risen by 275 per cent. in the last decade. What does it mean? Why has Germany plunged into such wild expenditure? Why does "Nauticus," professionally reviewing this expenditure and the "steady systematic" growth of the Navy to come, write of the "completion of the work so happily begun," without a qualm, political or economic, without even a prick of conscience? "With satisfaction and pleasure [he writes] it can be asseverated that the interest of the whole German people in the Navy has

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grown in an extraordinary degree. Thanks to the activity of schoolmasters, a particularly keen interest for maritime affairs has been awakened among the young generation. And this assures the naval idea (*Flottengedanke*) its prosperity in the future."

Sceptics, sciolists, cranks, and humanitarians should notice the word *Flottengedanke*, which has entirely superseded the old *Kaiseridee* or belief in the infallibility of the Emperor, having now become the official cognisance of Germans, including many Marxian Socialists. To understand the moving force of an idea artificially thrust upon the German people, we must bear in mind the immense power wielded by the universities upon the trend of thought and opinion and the mysterious power of the professor or *Gelehrte*. The "idea of the Fleet" has thus become a national movement. The mothers of Germany cradle their babies with its songs. It is taught in the schools, in the universities, in the press, on a thousand platforms. Some people in this country still speak of North Germany with reference to the policy of Berlin: it is one of those pedantic conventions which die so hard with us, just as we still persist in talking of Cologne. Such people are wont to think that in Bavaria the "Naval idea" is profoundly unpopular. Let them read "Nauticus" and see what he says about the united, compact (*strammen*) policy of German naval growth, and—if he can read German—he will discover that Bavaria is far closer allied to Prussia than Ireland is to England; that there is far more general comprehension of the uses of the German Navy and its objective in the Fatherland than there is, say, in Wales, of the requirements of our Navy; and that the Naval Idea is to Germany what Canossa was to Bismarck and the idea of German unity to Moltke, the "thinker of battles." The truly fearful expenditure involved by this policy he will find treated by the salubrious "Nauticus" with the serenity of a philosopher. Reduction of armaments—he does not even consider the matter! The past decade, he says, has been a good beginning; the next decade (1910–20) lies before us. Happy Michael! Where is Carlyle's venerable *Weiss-nicht-wo* professor? Where is *Smellfungus?*

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Where is the famulus that Mephistopheles taught to woo?
Where is little Gretchen of the pipe-clay past?

They are dead as the buccaneers of Elizabethan England. *Weiss-nicht-wo* is now a sprightly economic professor and his son commands a torpedo. *Smellfungus* is inventing an engine of destruction, which, by pressing a button, will throw an electric sheet of fire, like lightning, upon any given spot. Famulus has become "Nauticus." Gretchen no longer sits at the window and waits for "pale-faced Peter" to pass by, but writes to her "middy" at Kiel. The Army is discontented—the sailor holds the ballroom now; in the architectonics of German naval policy the Fatherland is one face and heart: serene, determined, confident, looking into the future with a national hope. Europe has never seen a more complete, so tremendous a change. A little more than half a century ago the Prussian fleet went under the hammer. To-day the naval power of the German Empire celebrates the first decade of its achievement. The spirit that it has engendered will contribute to the completion of the work begun, as "Nauticus" modestly remarks. There is no sign of retrenchment, of modification of the building programme, of arrangement with other nations, of economy or humanitarian consideration. On the contrary, "Nauticus" is jubilant at the prospects before the nation. There can be no stay in the German naval programme, he tells us, for the opinion of the public is against it. Concentration, energy, scientific State control and organisation, progress, determination to achieve the goal, the telos of the national ambition—such are the characteristics of modern Germany, and the goal is the creation of a fleet strong enough to dispute England's supremacy of the seas should ever the occasion arise. That is the message of "Nauticus" to his countrymen. In all this one cannot but admire the dogged pertinacity of the German people, striving so valiantly for the monopoly of European power. One cannot but see in this systematised State organisation and design the elements of potential success. One cannot but see in our own flabby disregard for the irrefutable facts confronting us the signs of decadence which lead to disaster.

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Reviewing the situation, then, as critically, as objectively as we please, we find these incontestable facts. First, that the two-Power standard has gone, and that in three years' time the number of German "Dreadnoughts" will almost equal our own. Secondly, we find the Prime Minister of England admitting that the last Naval Budget of £41,000,000 was not by one penny in excess of the absolute minimum of expenditure necessary to the nation's safety. Then we come to the psychologic aspects of the matter, which, in truth, are more alarming than the figures and facts of ships. And the first of these is that the German Government and the German people show not the slightest desire to modify either their naval programme or expenditure; that, on the contrary, "Nauticus" writes buoyantly of the last decade as the first part of the work begun which will lead to its happy completion, whereas *per contra* we, instead of receiving fresh inspiration from the steady, scientific, progressive competition of our rivals, seem disposed to hold up our hands and await the decree of Allah, or, to quote Admiral Mahan (*Daily Mail*, July 4): "The menacing feature is the apparent indisposition and slackness of the new voters over against the resolute spirit and tremendous faculty for organising strength evident in Germany." That is the governing as, ultimately, it will be the decisive factor in the situation. The second psychologic feature is that the writers who for the last ten years have ceaselessly called attention to the growing power and policy of Germany have been proved to be right, despite the mud heaped upon them by friends and foes; and that now Mr. Asquith, on behalf of the Liberal Government, one of the sanest and most democratic of modern times, is compelled to inform the House that the "scaremongers" were right and the Government was wrong, that there is no disposition on the part of Germany to entertain economic proposals, that her ships are being built quicker than we had supposed, that, in sum, the German "Dreadnought" fleet will in three years have reduced our assured supremacy to the condition—the great condition dreamt of by Pan-Germans—of the barest sufficiency.

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ONLY the other day we had Mr. H. M. Hyndman, speaking for English Social Democracy (*The Morning Post*, July 6), acknowledging the danger implied by the German Navy: "I do not hesitate to say, as a Social Democrat, that the governing minority of Germany is steadily preparing for war against this country." Bebel has, in fact, publicly stated as much in the Reichstag, and anybody who has ever lived in Germany, with sufficient German to speak and understand the language, is perfectly aware that the *Flottengedanke*, or Naval idea, which has for its fighting objective our Navy, is a national obsession. We must remember the historical aspects of the situation both on our and on the German side; how we, *beati possidentes*, at the apogee of our power are naturally inclined to slacken the national endeavour, our military preparedness, our prescient watchfulness; but how, on the contrary, Germany—young, robust, racked with the brand of foiled achievement in the past, hemmed in the centre of Europe, growing, expanding, bursting, as it were, with the suppressed energy of vaulting martial ambition—looks out upon the world like an athlete longing to try his muscles, and sees England with the Navy of England always, everywhere in her path. She has the great secret of youth in her favour—irresponsibility; for she has comparatively little to lose in a naval war with us, whereas we have all to fight for. All great empires have vanished. Egypt, Rome, Greece, Spain, Holland, Portugal, the Azteks, Timbuctoo—there is no finality. At this moment there would appear no national comprehension of the stupendous danger threatening our safety within the next three and five years—years which, it may be said deliberately, will be the most critical in the whole course of our history.

THEY will be critical because in them we hold the balance of safety or ruin in our hands. There is no fear of war now, and the last thing Germany thinks of to-day or in the immediate future is the "bogey" of invasion. The danger is the condition of naval power from the beginning of the year 1913. It is almost a certainty that a new German Navy programme will become law in the year 1912, continuing the present rate of

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construction of four "Dreadnoughts" per annum; and, if so, we shall be confronted with the necessity of laying down at least eight "Dreadnoughts" every year to secure even the bare sufficiency. It may then be too late ever to hope to regain more than what one may call a sporting margin. Our chance—our last chance—is the present, and if we fail now to act, the opportunity will have passed for ever. This—not the question of the Lords, not in the least the local squabble about woman's suffrage—is the life-affair of the nation which it is the duty of every man and woman in the country to see into.

The proper course is to take the whole question out of the loathsome ruck of party politics and place it, as the Germans have done, in the security of the law. This is a method which should appeal to all Liberals, both from the political and the economic standpoint. What is required is immediate decision, immediate action. And the simplest, surest way is by means of an emergency naval law or Act based on a settled standard of power, preferably the two-keels-to-one, financed by an immediate emergency loan. Only in this manner can the nation be sure that the matter will be treated by the two political parties on strict national lines. Only in this manner shall we be rid of the cancerous scares and party alarums which have caused the layman to regard the whole business as the shepherd in the wolf's skin. And only in this manner shall we be able to recover the lost ground, to meet the danger, when it comes, with due serenity, to assure the nation's welfare and continuity.

Let Germany see that we are determined to uphold our former supremacy and not to be built up to, and a twofold object will as likely as not be achieved: the security of England and an arrangement of shipbuilding programmes. As *Machtpolitik*, or force, is the reason of German policy, so is force the only argument that Germany will listen to. We all of us admit now that we are building enormously expensive ships solely as the result of the German programme; we should all be able to see

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that if we show Germany that England is determined never to be outbuilt, it is more than probable that Germany will come into the fair-way of an arrangement. As it is, on the eve of the "great condition," Germany cannot be expected to consider such a proposal. It would be un-English to ask her to. The idea can be dismissed. The alternative is the display in this country of an equally determined policy, the immediate construction of a fleet which in the year 1914—the year toasted over many a flagon of good Rhine wine—will be able to defy, not only the possibility of successful attack, but the possibility of all hostile aspiration. By this method only can we hope to treat with Germany. By this method only can we hope to avert the "great day."

Let the Liberal Government take up this matter without delay and the country will support them. Let Mr. Asquith's speech be placarded in every village in England. We cannot "wait and see" here. We have coquetted with the matter long enough. Delay now must be disastrous. We still have time. We have the money, and it is only right that the rich should be made to pay for it. By tax or loan the thing must be done. It cannot be that we have grown so indifferent to the splendid heritage bequeathed to us that our Naval Lords will consent to sit still and do nothing. At them the index hand of history points warningly. Is the fate of England to be that of the dogs of Constantinople, left to howl and die on an island because the authorities are too flaccid or careless to make up their minds? Let us remember this. Germany has made up *her* mind. On our action now will depend the failure or "completion of the work so happily begun."

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The Weight of the Electorates

By H. James Robinson

A General Election at which the boroughs and county constituencies, with electorates exceeding 20,000 voters, returned nearly one-eighth of the members representing Great Britain by more than one-half of their registered electors, is certainly noteworthy. At the recent election, 17 such cities and boroughs and 21 such county divisions returned 69 members to the House of Commons. Fifty of these members are supporters of the Government. Six of these Liberal members polled over 60 per cent. of their registered electors. Three others polled more than 59 per cent., and three more over 55 per cent. On the other hand, London (the City) polled 58.66 per cent. for Mr. Balfour, but no other cities, boroughs, or county constituencies with so large electorates polled 55 per cent. for any Tariff Reformer, although Birmingham and Brighton, and East Worcestershire, polled over 54 per cent. of their electorates in support of the new scheme of protection. Staunch to the Government, however, were such strongholds as Manchester, Salford, Glasgow, Leeds, Bradford, Bolton, Leicester, Derby, and Norwich. But it will be more evident how strongly the Government is based upon the people's will, if we tabulate these boroughs and county divisions, and give the percentages of their total electorates who voted for the Liberal or Labour candidates, or against them.

Very close upon the 50 per cent. limit came Bristol, which polled 48.83 per cent. of its total electorate in behalf of the Free Trade candidates, and Newcastle, which polled 48.73 per cent. But for the split vote, Manchester would have returned a solid block of six supporters of the Government, and Glasgow would have returned six out of seven. Sheffield, which polled

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for Free Trade 45.25 of its registered electors against 40.93 per cent. for Tariff Reform, only returned two Liberals *versus* three Tariff Reformers. The case of Nottingham was almost as bad, 46.35 of its electorate polling for Free Trade and only 42.40 per cent. against, whilst it returned two Tariff Reformers and one Free Trader. And Wolverhampton was almost in as bad a plight, for it polled 46.59 of its electorate for Free Trade and 47.04 against, but two Tariff Reformers were returned and one Free Trader.

Table showing the Boroughs and County divisions, with Electorates exceeding 20,000 voters, in which more than half the total number of registered electors voted for Liberal or Labour candidates, or against them

For Liberal or Labour Candidates.				For Tariff Reformers.	
	Per cent. of Electors.		Per cent. of Electors.		Per cent. of Electors.
Merthyr Tydfil .	66.53	Chester-le-Street	53.05	London (City of)	58.66
Glamorgan, Mid.	65.81	Salford . .	52.72	Birmingham .	54.51
Monmouth, West	65.17	Prestwich (Lanc.)	52.27	Worcs., East .	54.33
Clitheroe (Lanc.)	62.02	Norwich . .	52.09	Brighton . .	54.20
Glamorgan, East	61.39	Leeds . .	51.85	Wimbledon .	51.94
Mansfield .	59.89	Lanark, N.E. .	51.64	Blackpool .	51.73
Rotherham .	59.67	Derby . .	51,42	Brentford .	51.56
Barnsley . .	59.56	Tyneside . .	51.26	Ealing . .	51.51
Leicester . .	57.79	Manchester .	50.67	Hornsey . .	51.15
Bolton . .	57.41	Glamorgan, South	50.59	Lewisham .	50.71
Middlesbro' .	56.90	Stirlingshire .	50.24	Handsworth .	50.43
Oldham . .	54.54	Glasgow . .	50.06	Portsmouth .	49.83
Bradford . .	53.85	Lanark, N.W. .	50.01		
Blackburn .	53.44	Edinburgh .	49.91		

It is, however, beyond doubt that a large proportion of the population believe that Tariff Reformers came very near obtaining a majority of the seats in Great Britain. This belief was undoubtedly strengthened by Mr. Balfour when he declared in the House of Commons on February 24 last that the towns having an electorate of 25,000 or more were represented in Parliament (1) by a majority of Unionist members, and (2) by a vaster majority of Unionist votes. The Opposition cheered his remarks, no doubt believing that their leader had good warrant for so encouraging a statement. But an analysis of the voting shows the contrary to be the case.

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THE WEIGHT OF THE ELECTORATES

Northern Cities and Boroughs with Electorates exceeding 25,000

	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Govt.	Opp.
Liverpool .	83,193	78.17	30,732	36.94	34,304	41.23	2	7
Leeds . .	75,344	86.17	39,073	51.85	25,858	34.32	5	
Manchester .	68,590	89.52	34.759	50.67	26,648	38.85	5	1
Sheffield . .	65,219	86.96	29.512	45.25	26,696	40.93	2	3
Hull . .	45,477	85.32	22,218	46.74	17,505	38.58	2	1
Bradford . .	40,552	90.40	21,838	53.85	13,083	32.26	3	
*Newcastle .	38,534	85.24	18,779	48.73	14,067	36.51	2	
*Oldham . .	35,315	92.63	19,252	54.54	13,462	38.09	2	
Salford . .	33,277	91.77	17,544	52.72	12,997	39.05	3	
*Sunderland .	27,610	86.42	11,529	41.75	12,334	44.67		2
Totals .	513,111	85.98	244,236	47.59	196,954	38.39	26	14

* In the case of two-membered constituencies the highest poll on each side is taken as giving the number of votes polled.

From the above table it is seen that the ten cities and boroughs in the North of England, with electorates exceeding 25,000 voters, returned 26 members in support of the Government and 14 opposed to it. Of the 513,111 electors, as many as 441,190 cast their votes, 244,236 voting for the Government and 196,954 against. The percentage of the whole electorate who voted was 85.98. The percentage voting in favour of the Government was exceptionally high, being in Leeds 51.85 per cent., in Manchester 50.67 per cent., in Bradford 53.85 per cent., in Oldham 54.54 per cent., and in Salford 52.72 per cent. In five of these great Northern cities and boroughs *more than half the total electorate polled for the Government.* On the other hand, the highest percentage of votes cast against the Government, viz., in Sunderland, was 44.67 ; and in Liverpool, which gave 7 seats to the Opposition, the percentage who voted against the Government was only 41.23. But, of course, Mr Balfour was not thinking of the northern towns when he spoke. The following table shows the Midland and Southern boroughs with electorates exceeding 25,000.

There was no contest in West Birmingham, and the number of electors (12,313) is not included in the total given in the first column of the above table. Whereas in the case of the great

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	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Govt.	Opp.
Birmingham .	75,523	74.51	15,436	20.43	40,843	54.51		6
Bristol . .	55,347	87.96	27,026	48.83	21,661	39.13	3	1
Nottingham .	44,725	88.75	20,732	46.35	18,963	42.40	1	2
*Portsmouth .	33,666	86.65	12,397	36.82	16,777	49.83		2
Wolverhampton	33,661	93.63	15,685	46.59	15,833	47.04	1	2
Leicester . .	25,336	91.53	14,643	57.79	8,548	33.74	2	
Totals .	268,258	85.19	105,919	39.48	122,625	45.71	7	13

* In Portsmouth a Labour candidate stood as well as the two Liberal candidates.

Northern boroughs, the number of votes given to the Government was more than half the number of the electorate in five instances, in the Midland and Southern constituencies Birmingham alone gave over half its votes to the Opposition, whilst Leicester polled 57.79 per cent. of its full strength for the Government. The table shows that 13 seats out of 20 were won by the Opposition, only 7 being held by the Government. In the next table the great London boroughs are shown.

	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Govt.	Opp.
West Ham .	42,343	75.23	18,814	44.43	13,042	30.80	2	
Lambeth . .	41,878	84.73	16,250	38.80	19,235	45.93	1	3
Camberwell .	40,737	86.42	16,894	41.47	18,313	44.95	1	2
Islington . .	40,607	86.47	18,229	44.89	16,884	41.58	4	
Wandsworth .	38,523	82.90	13,749	35.69	18,188	47.21		1
Hackney . .	35,255	85.88	16,501	46.80	13,777	39.08	2	1
St. Pancras .	33,589	83.97	14,724	43.83	13,482	40.14	3	1
Southwark .	30,165	81.61	13,174	43.67	11,445	37.94	2	1
City of London.	30,010	74.06	4,623	15.40	17,604	58.66		2
Croydon . .	27,350	86.10	11,327	41.41	12,223	44.69		1
Lewisham .	25,021	86.52	8,960	35.81	12,690	50.71		1
Totals .	385,478	83.04	153,245	39.75	166,883	43.29	15	13

The City of London polled 58.66 per cent. of its electorate for the Opposition, and Lewisham polled just over half its strength on the same side. In no instance was there so heavy an aggregate poll as was seen in the cases of Wolverhampton (93.63 per cent.)

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and Leicester (91.53 per cent.) in the Midlands, and in the cases of Bradford (90.40 per cent.), Oldham (92.63 per cent.), and Salford (91.77 per cent.) in the great Northern towns. The table shows that though the votes for the Government were only 153,245 against 166,883 given to the Opposition, the Government held 15 seats against 13 held by the Opposition.

In the next table a summary of the three tables already given appears together with the figures for Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Cardiff.

	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Gov.	Opp.
Glasgow . .	86,507	86.69	43,309	50.06	31,692	36.63	5	2
Edinburgh . .	49,740	87.45	24,828	49.91	18,671	37.44	3	1
Cardiff (district) .	28,723	86.54	13,207	45.98	11,652	40.56	1	
Northern boroughs	513,111	85.98	244,236	47.59	96,954	38.39	26	14
Midland and Southern .	268,258	85.19	105,919	39.48	122,625	45.71	7	13
London boroughs	385,478	83.04	153,245	39.75	166,883	43.29	15	13
Totals . .	1,331,817	85.10	585,044	43.92	548,477	41.18	57	43

The above table shows that in the boroughs with electorates exceeding 25,000 voters, 585,044 votes were given for the Government, and 548,477 votes against, with the result of returning 57 Free Traders and 43—or, including Mr. Chamberlain, who was not opposed—44 Tariff Reformers. Mr. Balfour was wrong in saying that the Unionists were in a majority, and wrong in saying they had a majority of the votes, for the balance of votes polled was 36,567 in support of Free Trade.

A consideration of the county constituencies with electorates exceeding 25,000 voters does not much strengthen the position of the Opposition.

These ten huge county constituencies, returning one member each, with an aggregate electorate of 320,427 voters, gave five members for and five against the Government. The balance of votes was 7446 in favour of the Opposition. In only one instance, viz., the Tyneside division of Northumberland, did the Government member receive more than half the possible

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County Constituencies with Electorates exceeding 25,000

	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Govt.	Opp.
Essex, Romford .	52,984	83.80	23,181	43.75	21,224	40.05	1	
,, Walthamstow	39,117	85.01	17,726	45.31	15,531	39.70	1	
Middlesex, Harrow.	35,379	85.74	13,575	38.37	16,761	47.37		1
,, Tottenham	29,260	82.32	12,302	42.04	11,787	40.28	1	
,, Enfield .	28,571	82.93	11,383	39.84	12,625	43.09		1
,, Ealing .	25,073	84.25	8,210	32.74	12,916	51.51		1
Staffs: Handsworth	28,937	83.21	9,488	32.78	14,594	50.43		1
Surrey, Wimbledon	27,810	84.05	8,930	32.11	14,445	51.94		1
Northumberland: Tyneside . .	25,667	81.67	13,158	51.26	7,807	30.41	1	
Lancashire: Stretford . .	27,629	85.20	12,917	46.75	10,626	38.45	1	
Totals .	320,427	84.00	130,870	40.88	138,316	43.16	5	5

votes, but in three cases, viz., in the Ealing division of Middlesex, the Handsworth division of Staffordshire, and the Surrey division of Wimbledon, the Opposition voters polled more than half the votes on the register.

The boroughs with electorates ranging from 20,000 to 25,000 voters are twelve in number, viz., three Northern, four belonging to the Midland or Southern counties of England, three in London, and one Welsh, and one Scottish. They are classified in the

	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Govt.	Opp.
Northern: Blackburn . .	22,572	94.67	12,064	53.44	9,307	41.23	2	
Bolton . .	21,341	92.56	12,275	57.41	7,479	35.05	2	
Middlesbro' .	21,756	87.95	12,380	56.90	6,756	31.05	1	
Midland: Derby .	20,113	91.38	10,343	51.42	8,038	39.96	2	
Norwich .	21,607	91.01	11,257	52.09	8,410	38.92	2	
Southern: Brighton	21,427	89.23	7,506	35.03	11,625	54.20		2
Southampton .	20,205	82.90	8,878	43.93	7,874	38.97	2	
London: Clapham	22,611	86.26	8,762	38.75	10,743	47.51		1
Fulham . .	21,009	83.06	7,761	36.94	9,690	46.12		1
Finsbury .	21,557	83.37	7,551	35.02	10,422	48.35	1	2
Welsh: Merthyr Tydfil: . .	23,219	87.01	15,448	66.53	4,756	20.48	2	
Scotch: Aberdeen.	23,827	80.42	11,046	46.35	6,747	28.31	2	
Totals .	261,244	86.93	125,271	47.95	101,847	38.98	16	6

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foregoing table, and show a result very favourable to the Government.

The percentage of the total electorate who voted for the Government in the boroughs enumerated in the preceding table, viz., 47.95, is higher even than that recorded in the case of the largest Northern boroughs set out in the first table, viz., 47.59, and is due to the extraordinarily high Government polls in Merthyr Tydfil (66.53 per cent.), Bolton (57.41 per cent.),

	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Govt.	Opp.
Cheshire: Wirral .	22,330	85.84	8,862	39.68	10,309	46.16		1
Durham: Chester-le-Street . .	23,906	81.87	12,684	53.05	6,891	28.82	1	
Essex, South-East .	24,645	83.12	9,288	37.68	11,199	45.44		1
Kent: Dartford .	21,398	87.84	8,990	42.01	9,807	45.83		1
Lancs.: Blackpool.	22,360	87.25	7,943	35.52	11,567	51.73		1
Clitheroe .	22,368	92.09	13,873	62.02	6,727	30.07	1	
Prestwich .	22,123	89.24	11,564	52.27	8,180	36.97	1	
Bootle . .	23,903	78.74	8,869	37.10	9,954	41.64		1
Middlesex: Hornsey	23,540	87.82	8,633	36.67	12,041	51.15		1
Brentford .	20,701	84.50	6,819	32.94	10,675	51.56		1
Monmouth, West .	20,399	80.09	13,295	65.17	3,045	14.92	1	
Nottingham: Mansfield . . .	21,075	80.68	12,622	59.89	4,382	20.79	1	
Worcester, East .	23,269	84.21	6,955	29.88	12,644	54.33		1
Yorkshire: Barnsley	20,861	83.78	12,425	59.56	5,053	24.22	1	
Doncaster .	21,511	82.45	10,654	49.52	7,085	32.93	1	
Rotherham .	20,487	82.45	12,225	59.67	4,667	22.78	1	
Totals . .	354,876	84.51	165,701	46.69	134,226	37.82	8	8

Middlesbro' (56.90 per cent.), Blackburn (53.44 per cent.), Norwich (52.09 per cent.) and Derby (51.42 per cent.). On the other hand, Brighton alone recorded more than half its possible votes for the Opposition, viz., 54.20 per cent. Sixteen of the 22 seats are held by Free Traders, and six by the Protectionists. The total number of votes given to Free Traders was 125,271, and to the Opposition 101,847, showing a balance of votes in favour of Free Trade of 23,424. In the next table are set out the English county constituencies with electorates ranging from 20,000 to 25,000.

As in the case of the county constituencies with electorates exceeding 25,000, the seats are evenly divided between the

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Government and the Opposition. But the polling was much heavier on behalf of the Government; the percentage polled by West Monmouth Free Traders being 65.17 per cent. of the electorate. Other high percentages were: for Free Trade, Chester-le-Street, 53.05; Clitheroe, 62.02; Prestwich, 52.27; Mansfield, 59.89; Barnsley, 59.56, and Rotherham, 59.67. On the other side, East Worcestershire polled 54.33 per cent. of its electorate for Tariff Reform; and Blackpool (51.73), Hornsey (51.15), and Brentford (51.56) also polled more than half their "highest possibles." The votes polled for Free Trade exceeded those polled for Tariff Reform by 31,475, far surpassing the balance of 7446 given in favour of the Opposition by the ten largest county constituencies. But if these 26 largest English county constituencies made so strenuous a fight for Free Trade, dividing the seats equally with their opponents, but polling a majority of 24,029 votes upon their total electorate of 675,303, what shall be said of the three Welsh and five Scottish county constituencies with electorates from 20,000 to 25,000? They are shown in the following table.

	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Gov.	Opp.
Glamorgan, East	23,979	85.27	14,721	61.39	5,727	23.88	1	
Mid . .	20,017	82.70	13,175	65.81	3,382	16.89	1	
South .	22,953	82.87	11,612	50.59	7,411	32.28	1	
Lanark: Partick	23,300	84.17	10,093	43.31	9,522	40.86	1	
North-West	20,274	87.14	10,140	50.01	7,528	37.13	1	
North-East	21,811	83.78	11,265	51.64	7,012	32.14	1	
Renfrew: East .	20,947	87.91	9,645	46.04	8,771	41.87	1	
Stirlingshire .	20,144	82.09	10,122	50.24	6,417	31.85	1	
Totals .	173,425	84.49	90,773	52.34	55,770	32.15	8	

The above is the most striking table presented in this analysis. Of the eight constituencies six polled more than half of their total electorates on behalf of Free Trade and the Government! Mid-Glamorgan closely approached the record polling of Merthyr Tydfil (66.53) and exceeded that of West Monmouth (65.17). Moreover, of the total electorate of 173,425, no fewer than 90,773 votes, or 52.34 per cent., were cast in favour of Free Trade.

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On the other hand, less than one-third of the electorate polled for the Opposition. All the seats, eight in number, were secured by Free Traders, and the balance of votes in their favour was 35,003. The only constituency that had any show of approximating to the overwhelming Free Trade vote was the Partick division of Lanarkshire, and in that case the majority for the Free Traders was only 571, but it should be noted that Mr. Parker Smith sat from 1890 to 1900, with increasing majorities, as a Liberal Unionist.

In the next table a summary of the electorates exceeding 20,000 voters is given, and Mr. Balfour's boast is shown to be absolutely without warrant.

	Electorate in 1910.		For Government.		Against Government.		Seats.	
	Total.	Per cent. who voted.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Votes.	Per cent. of Electors.	Govt.	Opp.
Boroughs exceeding 25,000 .	1,331,817	85.10	585,044	43.92	548,477	41.18	57	43
Counties exceeding 25,000 . .	320,427	84.00	130,870	40.88	138,316	43.16	5	5
Boroughs, 20,000 to 25,000 . .	261,244	86.93	125,271	47.95	101,847	38.98	16	6
Counties, 20,000 to 25,000 . .	528,301	84.51	256,474	48.54	189,996	35.96	16	8
Totals . .	2,441,789	85.03	1,097,659	44.95	978,636	40.07	94	62

This table shows that the borough and county constituencies in Great Britain with electorates exceeding 20,000 voters in January 1910, with a total electorate of nearly 2½ million voters (2,441,789), returned 94 supporters of Free Trade and the Government, and 62 members opposed to the Government. Nearly 45 per cent. of the voters on the register recorded their votes for Free Trade, against just over 40 per cent. for Tariff Reform. The total votes for Free Trade candidates exceeded those for Tariff Reform candidates by 119,023. The fact that over 85 per cent. of the electorate polled in weather that was often of a very severe character demonstrates the earnestness with which the struggle was regarded by all classes of the electors.

But "truth can never be confirmed enough," and in view of the persistence with which the Tariff Reformers are encouraged

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to make another effort to overthrow the existing fiscal policy, it may be as well to proceed a little further in demonstrating how overwhelmingly strong in behalf of Free Trade was the recent decision of the electors of Great Britain.

We will take the two counties of Glamorgan and Warwick, for though their example was brilliantly followed, they stand pre-eminent in virtue of the overwhelming majorities with which they returned their representatives to the House of Commons.

CONSTITUENCIES WITH MAJORITIES EXCEEDING 3000 VOTES

Glamorgan: 5 borough, 5 county	Majorities	Warwick: 10 borough, 4 county	Majorities
Mid	9,793	Tamworth	5,514
East	8,994	Birmingham, West *	5,079
Rhondda	8,965	Bordesley	5,568
Gower	6,780	Edgbaston	5,101
South	4,201	East	4,502
Merthyr Tydfil	10,692	Central	4,304
,, ,,	9,085	North	4,201
Swansea District	6,073	South	3,731
Swansea Town	3,096	Aston Manor	5,441
Total (Free Trade)	67,679	Total (Tariff Reform)	43,441

* Mr. Chamberlain was unopposed in 1910, his majority in 1906 is given.

The tenth seat in Glamorganshire, viz., Cardiff district, was won by a Free Trader with a majority of 1555, in spite of his opponent being the popular brother of the Marquis of Bute, the predominating landholder in Glamorganshire.

In Warwickshire, Tamworth was the only county constituency that returned its member with a majority exceeding 3000. Stratford-on-Avon and Rugby returned Tariff Reformers by majorities of 1667 and 1205 respectively. Nuneaton spoiled the political symmetry of the county by returning a Free Trader by the narrow majority of 263. The two borough seats of Coventry and Warwick and Leamington returned Tariff Reformers by majorities of 216 and 954 respectively. It appears, then, from a study of the two protagonist counties that while Free Traders have a reasonable chance of winning two borough seats, and possibly two county seats, their only insecure seat is Nuneaton. In Glamorganshire the hardiest Tariff Reformer would scarcely dare to hope for success. Continuing

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the comparison, we group Northumberland and Durham for Free Trade against Middlesex (county seats) and London boroughs, still selecting only the seats where majorities exceeding 3000 were recorded.

Northumberland:	Majorities	London:	Majorities
Wansbeck	6,222	The City	13,284
Tyneside	5,361	,,	12,679
Newcastle	4,712	South Kensington	4,460
,,	4,174	Wandsworth	4,439
Durham:		St. George's, Hanover Sq.	3,914
Houghton-le-Spring	6,011	Lewisham	3,730
Chester-le-Street	5,793	Strand	3,213
North-West	5,270	Middlesex: Uxbridge	4,708
Bishop Auckland	5,129	Ealing	4,706
Jarrow	5,035	Hornsey	3,881
South Shields	4,236	Brentford	3,856
Gateshead	4,049	Harrow	3,186
London: West Ham, South	4,882		
Total (Free Trade)	60,874	Total (Tariff Reform)	66,056

The two county divisions of Northumberland which are not included in the above table are Berwick-on-Tweed (Liberal majority of 1683) and Hexham (Liberal majority of 1061); and the two borough seats, Morpeth and Tynemouth, returned Free Traders with majorities of 2865 and 494 respectively. Mid-Durham returned a Free Trader unopposed, and the other two county divisions, South-West Durham and Barnard Castle

Yorkshire: Rotherham	7,558	Surrey: Epsom	5,687
Barnsley	7,372	Wimbledon	5,515
Morley	6,822	Kingston	5,104
Normanton	5,632	Chertsey	4,613
Holmfirth	4,939	Guildford	4,231
Osgoldcross	4,677	Kent: St. Augustine's	5,386
Colne Valley	4,140	Sevenoaks	4,070
Hallamshire	4,008	Ashford	3,544
Spen Valley	3,892	Thanet	3,482
Shipley	3,775	Tonbridge	3,210
Keighley	3,636	Sussex: Lewes	4,596
Doncaster	3,569	Chichester	3,251
Middlesbro'	5,624	Brighton	4,061
Halifax	4,850	,,	4,153
,,	4,339	Hants: Fareham	4,354
Bradford, West	4,419	Basingstoke	3,685
Leeds, South	4,603	Portsmouth	4,380
West	3,315	,,	3,195
East	3,065	Berkshire: Wokingham	4,037
Sheffield, Brightside	3,736		
Dewsbury	3,135		
Total (Free Trade)	97,106	Total (Tariff Reform)	80,554

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returned Free Traders with majorities of 2438 and 1450. Of the six Durham borough seats not shown, three returned Free Traders, viz., Stockton-on-Tees (majority 1113), Hartlepool (majority 777), and Darlington (majority 29), whilst Durham City was held by a Tariff Reformer unopposed, and Sunderland returned two Tariff Reformers with majorities of 805 and 741. The sixth county division of Middlesex, Enfield, was carried by a Tariff Reformer by a majority of 1242, but the seventh, Tottenham, was held by a Free Trader by a majority of 515.

The huge majorities of the Yorkshire Free Traders are compared with those of the Tariff Reformers returned by the Home Counties in the preceding table.

The above table shows that the Yorkshire majorities exceeding 3000 amounted to 97,106 votes in favour of Free Trade members. There were no majorities in Yorkshire exceeding 3000 in favour of Tariff Reform members. In the Home Counties there was one seat fewer than the Yorkshire seats enumerated, but their total amounted to 80,554. There are still a few Tariff Reform majorities exceeding 3000 to be accounted for. They are shown in the next table, compared with the remaining Free Trade majorities.

Lancashire: Clitheroe	7,146	Lancashire: Blackpool	3,624
Leigh	3,947		
Prestwich	3,384		
Oldham	5,790		
,,	5,378		
Bolton	4,796		
,,	4,385		
Leicestershire Bosworth	3,282		
Leicester	6,095	Worcestershire, East	5,689
,,	5,789	Bewdley .	4,248
Staffordshire: Hanley	3,997	Staffordshire: Handsworth.	5,106
Notts: Mansfield	8,965		
Cheshire: Crewe	3,722		
Derbyshire: Ilkeston	4,200		
Mid	3,289		
Cornwall: St. Austell	3,807		
Monmouth: West	10,250		
North	4,261		
Total (Free Trade)	92,483	Total (Tariff Reform)	18,667

That the above table is somewhat lop-sided is the fault of the Tariff Reformers, for their majorities exceeding 3000 are exhausted. There are, however, still two batches of huge Free

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Trade majorities, the Welsh and Scottish, and they are set forth in the following table.

FREE TRADE MAJORITIES EXCEEDING 3000 POLLED IN

WALES.	Majorities	SCOTLAND.	Majorities
Carmarthen, East	5,168	Fife, West	8,801
West	3,625	Dundee	6,195
Carnarvon, Eifion	4,418	,,	5,813
Arfon	3,594	Leith Burghs	5,330
Denbigh, East	3,544	Montrose Burghs	3,902
West	3,025	Lanark, North-East	4,253
Merionethshire	4,192	Stirlingshire	3,705
Anglesey	3,492	Midlothian	3,635
Cardiganshire	3,405	Kirkcaldy Burghs	3,376
Nine Glamorganshire already given	67,679	Kilmarnock Burghs	3,236
		Orkney and Shetland	3,213
		Glasgow, St. Rollox	3,198
		Ross and Cromarty	3,012
Total	102,142	Total	57,669

In Great Britain there were 43 Free Trade majorities and 28 Tariff Reform majorities between 2000 and 3000 votes, so that if we pursued our comparison the strength of the Free Traders would become increasingly evident. The piling-up of so great majorities shows the intensity of feeling under which electors recorded their votes, and it is a fair presumption that the "influences" hostile to Liberalism would not soon be able to rally their forces to the pitch at which they stood in January last. The seats won by majorities from 1000 to 2000 were 112 in number, being held by 60 Free Traders and 52 Tariff Reformers. There were 252 majorities less than 1000, and they were held in equal numbers by Free Traders and Tariff Reformers. Of these, however, 23 seats were held by Free Traders and 31 by Tariff Reformers by majorities of less than 200 votes. Next to the strength of the Free Trade vote this analysis shows the urgent need of a Redistribution of Seats Bill.

The fluctuating fortunes of Liberals, and of those who are not Liberals, by whatever name they have been, or are now, known, are shown for the last twenty-five years in the chart (*see* p. 176).

The London boroughs are of course included in the above numbers, but the 5 University members are not included.

It is singular that in the boroughs in 1886 the Conservatives

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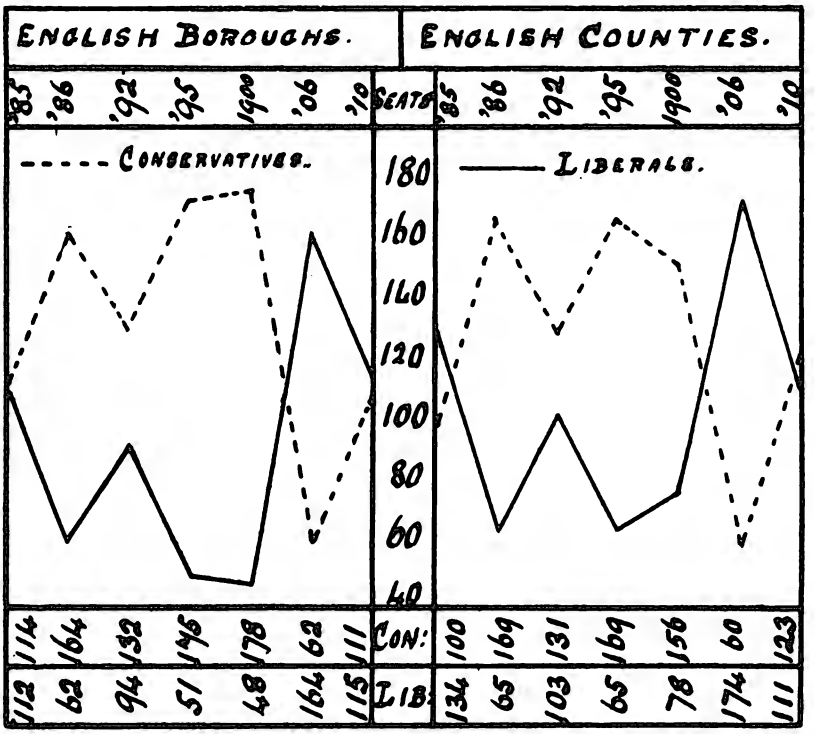
and Liberal Unionists numbered 164, whilst the Liberals were only 62, and in 1906 these numbers were reversed, the Liberals numbering 164 and the Opposition only 62. In 1885 the Liberal borough seats were less by two than the Conservative: in 1900 they were less by 130, and in the recent election they were 4 in excess of the Opposition borough seats.



In the English counties in 1885 the Liberals exceeded the Conservatives by 34, in 1906 by 114, but in the recent election they were fewer than the Opposition by 12. It is a strange coincidence that the Liberals held only 65 county seats in 1886 and again in 1895. In 1885 the Conservatives held 135 and the Liberal Unionists 34 seats, and in 1896 the Conservatives held 142 and the Liberal Unionists 27 seats.

The total votes polled in England were: Liberal and Labour 2,589,889 against 2,538,882—giving the Free Trade Government a total majority of 51,007 votes.

In 1885 United Liberals held 62 seats in Scotland out of 72.

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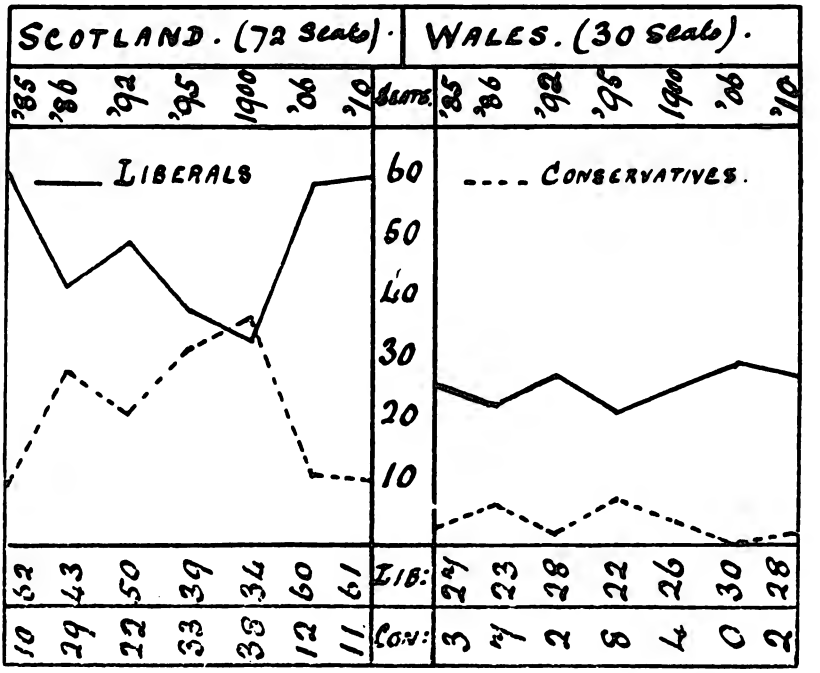
In the next year 17 of these seats were held by Liberal Unionists and two other seats had been won by the Conservatives. In 1900, the only year in which the Liberals were in a minority in Scotland, the Liberal Unionists again held 17 seats. Since the great majority of them have become Tariff "Reformers" their numbers have declined, and at the late election only



three were returned. The Free Traders polled 3 votes for every 2 counted for the Tariff "Reformers."

In Wales, when Unionism stood at its highest point in 1895, there were 7 Conservatives and one Liberal Unionist. In 1906 every seat was held by Liberal and Labour Free Traders, and at the recent election the two Tariff "Reform" Conservatives won their seats by the meagre majorities of 8 and 14 votes respectively. The total Liberal and Labour vote was 206,288 against 97,126 votes for the Tariff "Reformers," showing that the Free Traders, with a total majority of 109,162 votes, out-voted the Protectionists by more than two to one.

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Book Notices

ARCHÆOLOGY

GREEK ATHLETIC SPORTS AND FESTIVALS. By E. NORMAN GARDINER, M.A. Macmillan. 10*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Gardiner justifies the existence of this new volume in the Handbooks of Archæology and Antiquities series on the grounds that "many of the problems with which it deals are as real to us as they were to the Greeks" and that there is no other work in English on the subject. Even J. H Kraust's great work in Germany, he reminds us, was published in 1841, but since that time "the excavations at Olympia have for the first time enabled us to trace the whole history of the festival and to treat Greek athletics historically." The first part of Mr. Gardiner's book gives us a continuous history of Greek athletics, reminding us that the Greek in his best days continued the education of his body as well as of his mind till middle age, and incidentally warning us by ancient examples against professionalism in sport. The second part of the book is more technical, and gives us separate chapters on each form of Greek sport—the foot-race, boxing, and throwing the javelin, for instance. It is a mistake, declares the author, to think that the stade-race, or 200-yards foot-race, was the most honoured athletic event among the Greeks. The Athenians, indeed, who "combined with a certain reckless daring and love of adventure and constitutional dislike of prolonged exertion," honoured it highly. "But the home of Greek athletics was not Athens but the Peloponnese, and here, at least, the stade-race enjoyed no pre-eminence." Mr. Gardiner's book is charmingly as well as learnedly written, and contains nearly two hundred excellent illustrations.

FICTION

THE HARRY FURNISS DICKENS.

It was a Herculean task—a task at which the stout heart of Harry Furniss must almost have quailed—for one man to illustrate the whole of Charles Dickens's works. In the eighteen volumes before me, there are 500 drawings from his pen. While the original illustrators of Dickens often over-caricatured and sought for the grotesque and hideous, Mr. Furniss has taken these self-same characters and without losing their individuality has humanised and otherwise made them more palatable to refined modern taste. He was "brought up on Dickens," is inbred with the spirit and environment, and yet his work is distinctly modern. The artist has the quick pen, ready draughtsmanship and happy conception of a veteran while his years number little over half a century.

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Harry Furniss is the first artist to illustrate all Dickens's finished books, and this tremendous labour could never have been carried through except for his genuine love of work, and his admiration for Dickens, about whom he has so often lectured in different quarters of the world. The present illustrator is infinitely more human and less ridiculous than Leech or Cruikshanks. Phiz exaggerated, Furniss moderates.

It would, indeed, be difficult out of these 500 full-page drawings to select any for special mention when all seem so conscientious, one might almost say inspired creations. Refinement without ultra refinement, funny without being vulgar seem the dominant features of the work, for the artist, Harry Furniss, like the author, seems quite as much at home in the tragic and weird as he is with the humorous side of life. The death of Nancy was Dickens's favourite recitation. It is one thing to recite a story of murder, another to draw it. No artist ever attempted the latter task until Harry Furniss showed the actual crime in progress without making the design repulsive. The drawing reminds one of Rembrandt. Mr. Furniss is to be congratulated on his achievement.

HISTORY

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE. By CLEMENT SHORTER. Macmillan. 6*s*.

Hampden, Milton, Gray, Cowper, Burke, Shelley, Disraeli—these are a few of the great men who are the heroes of different episodes in Mr. Shorter's literary and historical rambles through Buckinghamshire. Magna Charta Island, too, is in Buckinghamshire, though Runnymede is in Surrey, and Wilkes was connected with the county by marriage and political ties. Mr. Shorter, though his writing lacks a certain logical quality as it lacks grace, has given us a book full of interesting facts and enthusiasms.

CHRONICLES OF THEBERTON, A SUFFOLK VILLAGE. By HENRY MONTAGU DOUGHTY. Introduction by the Rev. W. W. STREET, Litt.D. Illustrated. Macmillan. 2*s*. 6*d*. net.

This is an antiquary's somewhat haphazard collection of facts, running back to the time of Doomsday Book. It is a history of England written as a history of a village. We learn of the introduction of pins and of the Act of Henry VIII.'s reign regulating their price, and countless similar facts. The author is inclined to be dry-as-dust, but his book throws many valuable little lights on the state of the Church, magistrates, the Poor Law, agriculture, manners, and superstitions at different periods.

FRENCH MEN, WOMEN, AND BOOKS. By M. BETHAM-EDWARDS. Chapman and Hall. 12*s*. 6*d*.

Winning and, if we may say so, harmless essays. Miss Betham-Edwards tells over again the love-story of Balzac and his Polish countess, idealising it in a manner unusual in the modern biographer. Other essays deal with the domestic sort of French poetry and the new domestic sort of French fiction, with French views of England, and with the Université Populaire.

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LITERATURE

THE LETTERS OF JOHN STUART MILL. Edited with an Introduction by HUGH S. R. ELLIOTT. With a Note on Mill's Private Life by MARY TAYLOR. Longmans, Green, and Co. Two volumes. 21*s.* net.

These Letters cover the whole of Mill's life practically from the time when his real literary career began. The earlier letters are far the most interesting, especially those written to Carlyle. In these alone does he to some extent unbosom himself. His intimate friendship with Carlyle began just after his escape from the rigid Benthamism of his father and his introduction to the Romantic poets. He recognised in Carlyle the genius of the creative artist which he himself did not possess, but he again and again expresses the opinion that it was the function of thinkers like himself to demonstrate in terms of logic the truths which the artist intuitively perceived. The other letters are for the most part written like his books, in a lucid, ratiocinative, didactic style. They deal with various large questions, such as Constitutionalism, Women's Suffrage, Radicalism, and many ethical and economic problems.

UNCONSCIOUS MEMORY. By SAMUEL BUTLER. New and revised edition. With an Introduction by Professor Marcus Hartog. A. C. Fifield. 5*s.* net.

Unconscious Memory is largely of antiquarian and polemical interest; and one might agree with the critics who think that it might have been allowed to repose in the obscurity to which circumstances (including a fire at the printers') had relegated it for many years. But there is no use in publishing a "complete edition" of an author unless you include his inconsiderable, his controversial, and even his misguided works along with his good ones; and, so with *Erewhon* and *The Way of all Flesh*, we must resurrect Butler's views of the "authoress" of the *Odyssey* and his theory of heredity which was not, as a matter of fact, original at the time he propounded it).

SAHIB LOG. By JOHN TRAVERS. Duckworth. 6*s.*

There are many faults to be found in this novel, but it is worth while to find faults when the remaining qualities are so good. Its ideas are not worked to logical issue, but they are ideas. Its grammar is not above reproach and its spelling is a disgrace to the proof-corrector, but half a page of description—the shimmer of a city of the East, the breathless, arid spaces of its plains—blots out these absurd failings. Its episodes, hung loosely on the thread of Esmé Norman's experiences in India, lack inevitability and have rather a panoramic effect: but there are live people in the book, only half drawn, some of them, but with the shape of humanity about them. If this is a first novel the author has a chance of writing a second that should be fine work.

OXFORD FROM WITHIN. By HUGH DE SÉLINCOURT. Illustrated by YOSHIO MARKINO. Chatto and Windus. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

The text is far better than the illustrations. Mr. Markino is a most talented Japanese artist, but he does not understand Oxford, and he has

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not done justice to Oxford in his pictures. Mr. de Sélincourt *does* understand Oxford. He writes from the point of view of one who surveys it after some years of absence. He has been away from it long enough to see its charms, but at the same time he tries to fix its realities. He has both seriousness and humour, and he writes well. We do not know any one who with more just reflectiveness has reproduced the mixed atmosphere of the University.

EUSAPIA PALLADINO AND HER PHENOMENA. By HEREWARD CARRINGTON. Laurie. 10*s.* 6*d.* net.

If it could be proved that Mrs. Piper and Eusapia Palladino were consistent frauds, Spiritualism would lose nine-tenths of its contemporary evidence. Mr. Carrington in the present volume admits that Eusapia is a fraud whenever she gets the opportunity, but he describes a series of phenomena which he claims could not possibly have been fraudulent—phenomena produced in the presence of two practised conjurors and the sceptical secretary of the Society for Psychical Research. He also gives a history of the previous experiments of Lombroso, Richet, and others with Eusapia. This is an impressive volume, which may not convert us to the author's belief in Spiritualism, but which at least suggests the advisability of keeping an open mind on the subject.

MILITARY HISTORY

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR: A CONCISE HISTORY OF ITS CAUSES, PROGRESS AND RESULTS. By JOHN FORMBY. With 66 maps and plans. John Murray. 18*s.* net.

A condensed and workmanlike history, as the author puts it, of "the war rather than the fighting"; the war being so much the more complicated and difficult business that historians have generally preferred to shirk the broad issues and emphasise the sanguinary details. Mr. Formby's view is commendably wide, and he gives, for the first time in a work of this sort, an account of the distracting effects on the campaign of the operations of Napoleon III. in Mexico. He comes to the conclusion that the battle of Stone's River, on the last day of 1862, was the military turning-point of the war.

IRELAND, FROM THE UNION TO CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION, 1800–1829. By D. A. CHART. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

Impartiality is a valuable asset on Irish questions and Mr. Chart may lay claim to that virtue, for which reason this book is to be recommended as an informative statement of the social, economic, and administrative conditions of the country from 1800 to 1829. On the whole, the author takes an optimistic view of things. His picture of Ireland at the beginning of the nineteenth century is worth reading. He writes well and lucidly. He materially contributes towards our understanding of the problem, gently pointing out some of the mistakes made by the authorities, and suavely pointing to some of the reforms to be carried through in the future.

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PERSIA IN REVOLUTION. By J. M. HOWE and PAGE L. DICKINSON. Fisher Unwin.

This is another touch of impressionism and not at all a bad one. The authors saw something of Persia, and, being plainly men of sense and observation, they noted a good many interesting things which are duly and agreeably chronicled. Coming back, they had a dip into the Caucasus, where they likewise found a simmering state of revolution; but they write well of the dancing of the Cossack girls and altogether have compiled a little book of Persian travel which has the merits of simplicity and sincerity.

POETRY

THE BALLAD OF JOHN DUNN AND OTHER POEMS. By CHARLES KINROSS. Elkin Mathews. 1s. net.

It is wonderful what a sincere man can do with simple if not ordinary emotions and ordinary if not always simple language. Mr. Kinross (one would say) is very unhappily fettered by a commercial civilisation (though he never uses such long words as that); he is very much in love; and he has a certain sense of something more than the obvious, of an inner light and a larger movement. Out of an experience no more startling than this he has made on the way a few very beautiful poems: indeed he never sinks to the level of his environment till he comes to the Baby, when he rattles off the most absurd jingle, and thinks (being probably prejudiced) that what is good enough for the Baby is good enough for Mr. Elkin Mathews and any one else. His strength is in a remarkable metrical power: he makes his prosody control the simplest and roughest language. Thus in "The Song of the Clerk" (of all things) he has caught that exquisite asclepiad movement of Campion's:

> Could I but see the end, something content were I;
> 'Twould something mend the never-ceasing lie
> Of daily round, fitting another's plan
> Of plunder, rendered to another man.
>
> I work to-day, to-morrow is a guess;
> And when to-morrow comes, then have I less
> Than this my day. Gone spring, and summer too,
> Come autumn days, what have I then to do?

SONGS FROM LONDON. By FORD MADOX HUEFFER. Elkin Mathews. 1s. net.

The charm of Mr. Hueffer is that we never know what he is going to write next. He goes through life always ready to intensify his moods into a poem or a song. And though he never overwhelms us with emotion, he never fails to crystallise the impression of the moment, to record the moments of an artist's life. He gives us, in a little book of only thirty pages, sometimes Roman elegies, three of them, meditative and dignified; sometimes a drinking song or a highwayman's catch, a Gothic woman's love-song, a vignette of the Moorish desert, or a "Masque of Every Man." But we like him best in the poems which give the book its name, when he imagines a romantic fantasy of his lady on the tube between Baker Street

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and Finchley Road, or simply bubbles over with a delightfully rhymed lyric under the clock at Kilburn Station. These two pages alone are worth a good deal more than a shilling, and they are perhaps of the most promising of modern poetry for an age that is just a little tired of epics and sonnets.

SCIENTIFIC

TOTEMISM AND EXOGAMY. A TREATISE IN CERTAIN EARLY FORMS OF SUPERSTITION AND SOCIETY. By J. G. FRAZER, D.C.L. Four volumes. Macmillan. 50*s.* net.

Professor Frazer's book is a magnificent achievement, whether as a compilation of facts about primitive society or as a piece of exposition and reasoning. Perhaps it was not an ideal arrangement to begin the book with a reprint of an earlier work of more than twenty years ago, so much of which the author himself refutes in later pages. We do not wish to say anything, however, which would seem to detract from the praise of an anthropologist who has given us so complete a survey of all those tribes in Australia, Asia, Africa, and America among whom totemism and exogamy exist side by side. It was Professor Frazer's object to study the origin of these institutions and to discover whether they bear any essential relation to each other. After study of a vast array of facts, he has come to the conclusion that the exogamous class "is a totally different social organisation from the totemic clan and not, as we had previously inclined to suppose, a mere extension of it." Dr. W. R. R. Rivers's investigations in the Bank's Islands have made this especially clear. As for the origin of totemism, it should probably be ascribed to the ignorance of early peoples as to the paternity of children. Thus, mother, feeling the child stirring within her, would impute its presence there, not to human father, but to some passing animal or other object which caught her eye at the critical moment. Hence totemism is not a religious worship of animals, trees, and so forth, as is often believed, but a belief in kinship with them. The origin of exogamy seems to have been the civilising instinct of dislike for sexual promiscuity. Dr. Frazer discusses philosophically the influence of both institutions on civilisation, and concludes that totemism has had scarcely any influence at all. His speculations are bold and challenging, but judicious; his array of evidence comprehensive; and his style eloquent and vivid beyond what we are accustomed to in books of this kind.

SOCIAL AND TRAVEL

THE GOVERNANCE OF EMPIRE. By P. A. SILBURN, D.S.O. With a map. Longmans, Green, and Co. 9*s.* net.

A useful contribution, in a rather confused way, to a better understanding of Colonial problems and the Colonial point of view. The author holds strong views as to the treatment of the natives in South Africa (he is himself a member of the Natal Legislative Assembly), and he foresees difficulties as the result of the "inevitable" progress of the negro race and of the undesirable mixture of races which has recently taken place.

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CHARITY AND SOCIAL LIFE: A SHORT STUDY OF RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL THOUGHT IN RELATION TO CHARITABLE METHODS AND INSTITUTIONS. By C. S. LOCK. Macmillan and Co. 6*s.* net.

Mr. Lock is very learned about eleemosynary history. Greek and Roman charity, the *annona civica*, the Jewish custom of the gleanings, the alms of the Pharisee, monastic poverty, the Guild charities, and the slow organisation of statutory Poor Law relief, are all detailed with a particularity which is explained by the fact that the book is based on an article by the author in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. There is, however, an additional chapter, mainly explanatory, on the Report of the Poor Law Commission. About the ultimate effects of indiscriminate Old Age Pensions Mr. Lock (as might be expected) has grave doubts.

IN LOTUS-LAND JAPAN. With 104 illustrations from photographs by the author. By HERBERT G. PONTING. Macmillan and Co. 21*s.* net.

The most distinctive and valuable feature of this book is its fine collection of photographs, particularly of the famous Fuji and its neighbourhood; but Mr. Ponting has a keen eye as well as a clever camera, and he writes of the people with real affection, especially of the famous craftsmen of Kyoto. The book bears signs of having been written some years ago—years which, it is to be feared, have been busy in promoting the commercial spirit which is always at odds with the artistic. Mr. Ponting speaks feelingly of the amount of trash which, in the midst of so much that was beautiful, was being produced for export: and, since he left, the Japanese tradesman has not increased in conscientiousness. Japan has now to choose between the conservation of beauty (in every sense) and the making of money—the eternal dilemma, once again, of God and Mammon.

AMERICA'S MOTHERLAND. London: T. M. Middleton and Co.

This concise and comprehensive guide-book, issued under the auspices of the Great Central Railway, will prove invaluable to American tourists who desire to see all of the best of England that their time in the country will admit, and it may be recommended to many who would know more of the historic interest of London, Shakespeare's country, and the districts associated with such men as Milton, Burke, Penn, Washington, Gray, and Hampden, to mention a few of the great names of which the manual treats. A wealth of detailed information is given in convenient form, and a series of excellent illustrations add to the merit of this very handy pocket companion for the tourist. An interesting genealogical chart of the Washington family, and an historical sketch of the "home of the Pilgrim Fathers," will appeal specially to the American tourist. The purpose for which the book is intended precludes any aspirations to literary merit, but as a specimen of "how to get there and what to see on arrival" it is excellent. A chapter entitled "In a Land of Famous Men," by Mr. Clement Shorter, recounts the attractions of that part of the Chiltern district associated with men of note from the days of Milton to those of the Disraelis, while the section devoted to London outlines all the principal historic attractions of the world's capital.

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